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THE

# HISTORICAL COMPLEXITIES

OF

PICKERING, MARKHAM, SCARBOROUGH and UXBRIDGE



Ontario

NORTH PICKERING COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Ministry of Treasury Economics and  
Intergovernmental Affairs

Sept. 1973





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THE HISTORICAL COMPLEXITIES OF PICKERING-  
MARKHAM-SCARBOROUGH-UXBRIDGE;  
or a history of the area to be developed  
under the auspices of the North Pickering  
Community Development Project with digres-  
sions on related topics such as pioneer  
farming and old houses; the whole sometimes  
known as the

SETTLEMENT HISTORY REPORT

Prepared for the  
North Pickering Community  
Development Project  
by

Michelle Greenwald  
With the assistance of current residents

NORTH PICKERING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

September 1973



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### The Cover:

This building is on the northwest corner of Lot 26, Concession II in Pickering. There is no evidence as to who built this singular structure or what its original purpose was. Barns of stone are rare in Canada because of the climate so it was most likely designed for some other use. William Wilkie, from Fife, leased the northwest 60 acres from William Holmes in 1832 and bought it in 1844.





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Ministry of Treasury  
Economics and  
Intergovernmental  
Affairs

Queen's Park  
Toronto Ontario

October 19, 1973.

### PREFACE

The specific purpose of this report was to identify sites within the combined Airport & Community development sites which would be of local interest or of historical significance. This document will be augmented by information on architecturally historic buildings and structures as well as natural environmental features as basic resource information for the Plan for Development. By recognizing past events and their related sites within the development site in the early planning stages, provision will be made to incorporate these values into the design of the North Pickering Community. This document, therefore, can assist in providing an identity or sense of place for all residents of the North Pickering Community by identifying and recording the history and culture of the townsite and its immediate region.

In preparing the report, Miss Greenwald assembled all available documentation of historical events, practices, settlement patterns, families and individuals related to the settlement of the combined airport-town development sites. Other documentation obtained related to archaeological records of Indian presence on the combined sites. As many available sources of information as possible were investigated within the period allowed for this task, including the Ontario Archives (and the on-going Oral History Programme under its supervision), Historical Societies in the region of the new town and the present residents themselves.

In addition to the local residents whose important contribution to the researching of this report is indicated on the title page, the author would like to thank Richard Apthead of the Archive's Historical and Museums Branch for permission to look through the files of the late V.B. Blake and Harry Pietersme for his assistance with that work; Roger Nickerson of the Archives Branch for his help with the Oral History Tapes from Pickering; and Ronald Stagg for the information on the Mackenzie Rebellion from his doctoral thesis research.





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## INTRODUCTION

The object of this report is to provide some historical background for the planners, both provincial and federal, of the combined development sites (hereafter referred to as "the site") in parts of Pickering, Uxbridge, Markham and Scarborough. Although any type of proposed airport will not cover the entire area under federal jurisdiction with concrete, it is unclear how the historical information will be applied by the Toronto Area Airports Project. The planners of the Province's new town wish to identify sites of local interest or historical significance in order to incorporate them into the community design with the goal of providing "an identity or sense of place for all residents of the North Pickering Community by fostering and maintaining the history and culture of the townsite and its immediate region."

Officially this is a "settlement history", however the connotation of that term has never been clear to the author, who has therefore made her own deductions concerning the purpose and scope of this work. Firstly, this report is not a local history. Family trees, lists of buildings which made up each hamlet, names of blacksmiths, storekeepers and millers who served the population for over a century are details which have been kept to a minimum, as they have meaning only for those who knew intimately the people and places involved. Providing a context for a list of sites of "local interest or historical significance" is a good description of the following chapters. The better one is: an attempt to give the planners some indication of what it was like to live in that section of rural Ontario--particularly that it was bustling and vital, and of the forces which moulded that area. Furthermore, since the report covers two cultures, North American Indian and European, the uses of the same land by two different civilizations have been generally described and contrasted. The point should be made that the district under scrutiny, with one exception,



is not particularly unique or historic, but basically just average. It is distinctive only as a planning area.

The sources used for this report covered a wide range, but the bulk of the information came from local people. The Archives Oral History tapes and the score of interviews conducted personally by the author were only part of the contribution by area residents; their knowledge and experiences were also a major source of the information used by the authors of the two published histories of Pickering Township and the booklet on Markham Township. Much of that knowledge came from oral tradition. Such form of historical record is very troublesome. Popular stories can be completely inaccurate according to verifiable facts, which is not to say that any such stories were included in the existing local histories. More often there is no way to check on oral history and it must be accepted as at least an approximation of the original. Either way, the oral tradition, whether it is "correct" or not, is in itself history.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE INDIANS

Man has lived in the Pickering-Markham-Scarborough area for thousands of years. The prehistory of the site is a fascinating and complex one, and the transition between Indian control of the land and the white man's take over was fraught with environmental as well as political implications. The native peoples were not "noble savages" innocently communing with nature. Theirs' was an adjustment to the land and its resources. The white man sought to adjust the country to his needs and therein lies the difference between the two cultures which will be discussed in this and the following chapter.

Our knowledge of the prehistoric inhabitants of Ontario has grown enormously in recent years, yet the following outline of the evolution and development of the Ontario Iroquois remains basically hypothetical, and all too sketchy concerning many of the details. That the archaeologists are still discussing theories is due partly to the nature of the discipline and partly to the fact that a detailed examination of our prehistoric resources is just getting under way. Therefore, though the information below is not necessarily the final word, it does indicate the wealth of material to be considered.

By the Historic Period, two Indian cultures were to be found in Ontario with the dividing line close to the present-day partition of Northern and Southern Ontario. The North was inhabited by the Algonkin tribes, the South by the Ontario and St. Lawrence Iroquois.<sup>1</sup> It is the evolution of the Ontario Iroquois that interests us. The time sequence started with what J.V. Wright calls the Palaeo-Indian Period, from approximately 9000 B.C. to 5000

B.C., covering the Clovis and Plano cultures. (See Diagram 1) These peoples were primitive hunters known in Canada only by the chipped stone dart heads and knives, and the limited quarry sites that have been found.<sup>2</sup> As no evidence of such early occupation has been discovered in the site area, we shall go on to the next evolutionary step, the Archaic peoples (c.5000 B.C.-1000 B.C.) and specifically the Laurentian Archaic. (See Diagram 1) The first indication of this culture is dated roughly at 4000 B.C. There were small regional differences, but basically these people were hunters of big game (deer, elk and bear) and fisherman who had learned to work copper (that knowledge probably came from the west) and used stone weights on their spears to increase efficiency. In the summer they congregated together in villages and in the winter they dispersed to find food. The burial cult they practised has yielded evidence of a widespread trade pattern, including conch shells from the Gulf of Mexico.<sup>3</sup>

Within the North Pickering Project area, there are five known Laurentian Archaic sites. These are: Sewell, Ken Reesor I, Ansell, A. Bunker and (Brock Road). (See Map I) The first two are considered important enough to warrant preservation, Ansell and A. Bunker should be tested further, and only (Brock Road) needs no further attention.<sup>4</sup> The archaeologist's definitions of "testing" and "preservation" are linked with the basics of excavation. By "testing" he means checking whether or not excavation is warranted, as collection of artifacts on the surface does not always indicate precisely what lies beneath. "Preservation" refers to the retention of a site in an undisturbed state for an indefinite period to enable him to return to the site should a new technique be developed which might give him more information. Sites can be too complicated for simple digging,



# SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF

DIAGRAM I

## INDIAN CULTURES

YEARS AGO	PERIOD	CULTURE
250	TERMINAL  WOODLAND	<div><div><div>A.D.</div><div>1400</div><div>-</div><div>1650</div><div>1300</div><div>-</div><div>1400</div><div>900</div><div>-</div><div>1300</div></div><div><div>ERIE</div><div>NEUTRAL</div><div>HURON</div><div>PETUN</div><div>UREN / MIDDLEPORT</div><div>GLEN MEYER</div><div>PICKERING</div></div></div>
1,000		
2,000	INITIAL  WOODLAND	POINT PENINSULA  PRINCESS POINT
3,000		
4,000	ARCHAIC	LAURENTIAN
5,000		
6,000		
7,000		
8,000	PALAEO	<div>PLANO</div> <div>CLOVIS</div>
9,000	INDIAN	
10,000		
11,000		

and new and different methods are necessary. The archaeologist needs such sites left untouched, i.e., no earth moved, until he is satisfied that he can do no more.

Somewhere between 700 B.C. and 1000 A.D., the Archaic peoples started making and using pottery and thereby entered, for the convenience of archaeologists, into the Woodland Period. This time segment is further divided into the Initial Woodland, covering the adoption of pottery on a wide scale up to approximately 1000 A.D., and the Terminal Woodland era. (See Diagram 1) The peoples of this latter period are defined as those who began to practise corn agriculture on a major scale, and as those who can be identified with some degree of certainty, as ancestors of the historic tribes; this 1000 A.D. dividing line is a temporary one which has already been pushed back to 900 A.D. in some parts of Ontario and can presumably go back even earlier.<sup>5</sup>

Generally there was little change between the Archaic way of life and that of the following period;<sup>6</sup> the differentiations among Initial Woodland cultures were based simply on pottery styles and burial customs. The people who lived in the Metro Toronto area were those of the Point Peninsula culture.<sup>7</sup> (See Diagram 1) Although there was a small concentration of these people in the Credit River valley, there are no known sites of this period within our area; possibly the Peel Clay Plain hindered eastward movement.<sup>8</sup>

Information about the Terminal Woodland period is far more extensive and detailed than for previous periods. As mentioned above, there were two Iroquois cultures--the St. Lawrence and the Ontario--and we are interested in the latter.

The essential elements of Iroquois culture recognizable by archaeological means consist of the following: a) corn agriculture supplemented by fishing and hunting; b) large villages up to 10 acres in extent, frequently palisaded and located in easily defensible positions removed from navigable water routes; c) the construction of longhouses; d) a pipe smoking complex; e) bundle burials (the disarticulated skeleton of an individual who was first placed on a scaffold or in a shallow grave prior to reburial as a bone bundle), including small ossuaries (pits containing a number of bundle burials) in and around the village--although the Pickering people also practised flexed burials; f) the use of the dog as a food animal and possibly for sacrifice; g) an archaeological material culture dominated by pottery of essentially Iroquois character; and h) stone and bone tools, which persist in later Iroquois culture.

As already noted reliance on corn agriculture marks the change from Initial Woodland to Terminal Woodland, however, the point is one of emphasis. The earlier peoples would have grown some of their food, but it takes time for diets and life styles to alter, so that the archaeologist changes his cultural labels when the agricultural product became a mainstay of existence and therefore influenced the ordering of the community. In a similar manner, the characteristics involved in the cultural definition of the Iroquois as listed above, appeared slowly and not all at the same time, and became distinguishing traits when they influenced the community's style of life.

This evolutionary process within the Terminal Woodland period has been divided into three stages: Early Ontario Iroquois, Middle Ontario Iroquois, and Late Ontario Iroquois.<sup>10</sup> These simplistic appellations will remain until more information is collected to describe and analyze the divisions. The early Ontario Iroquois flourished from 1000 A.D.



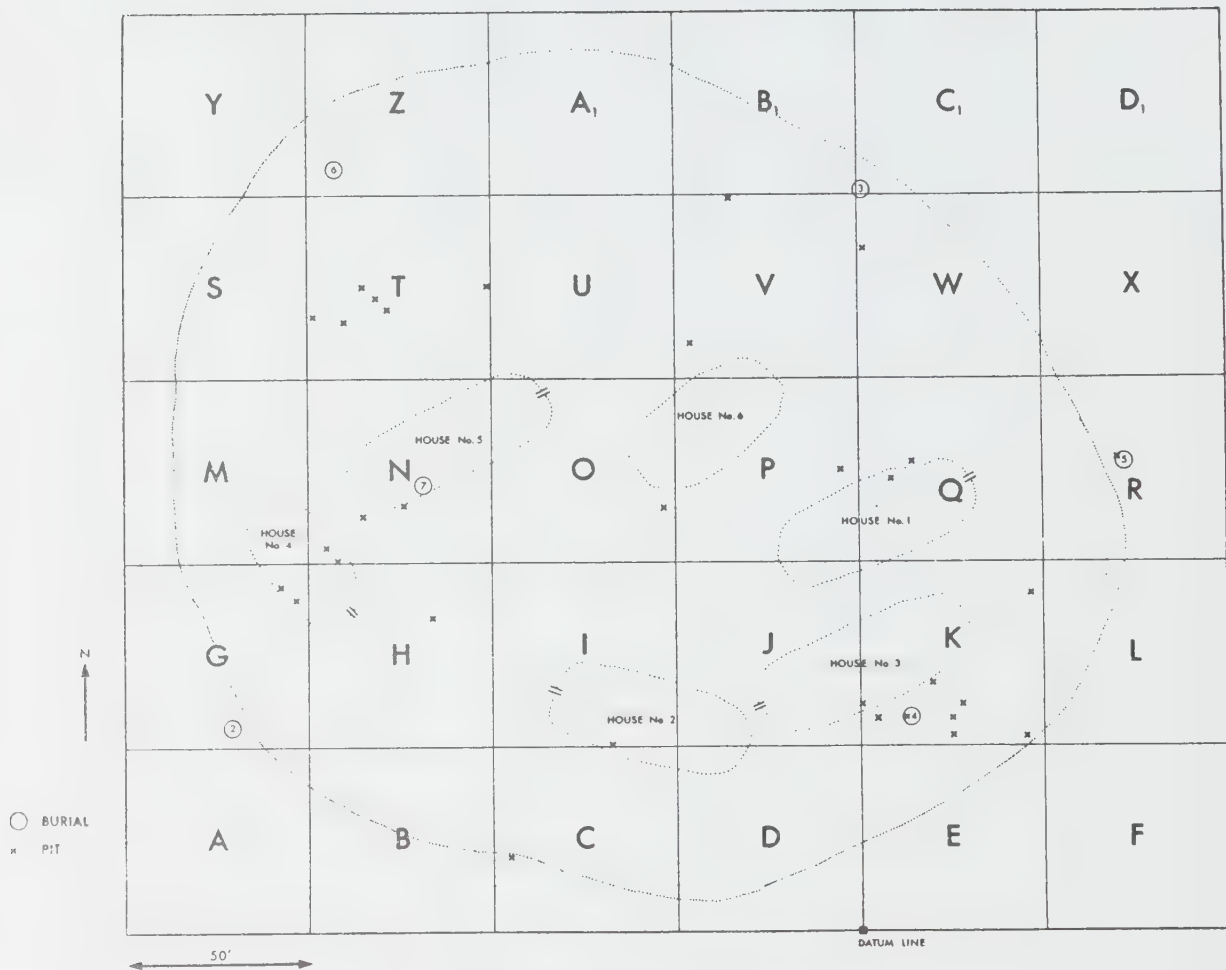


Figure 1. An Early Ontario Iroquois village layout. The house, pit and burial distributions, superimposed on the grid system used in excavation, of the Miller Site, Pickering Culture. From W.A. Kenyon, The Miller Site, p. 19.

to 1300 A.D., with the two known cultures of that period being the Glen Meyer and Pickering. The pottery of the Pickering people has indicated that they evolved out of the Point Peninsula culture (Glen Meyer pottery came from the Princess Point peoples of the Initial Woodland period).<sup>11</sup> (See Diagram 1) Our knowledge of the Pickering people began with the excavation of the Miller Site just north of the future community's southern boundary, which was excavated between 1958 and 1961 by Dr. Walter Kenyon of the Royal Ontario Museum. (See Map 1) The Miller Site is the only evidence of the first substage found so far within the site boundaries, although there are several others nearby. The distinctive characteristics of this culture were palisaded villages of longhouses built on hills or near a ravine and far from navigable water, fishing and agriculture based on corn, and bundle burials.<sup>12</sup> Half of the male bodies found were young men, ages 17 to 29, one of whom had a flint projectile imbedded in his spine, suggesting that fighting was an important activity and took place close enough to home for the warriors to be buried near the others of the village.<sup>13</sup> Comparison of the above with the list of Ontario Iroquois characteristics shows how the Pickering people foreshadowed the Historic Iroquois. The differences between the Early Ontario Iroquois and the Historic tribes were ones of numbers, styles and emphasis. Some of the basics evolved between 900 and 1300 A.D.

By 1300, the Pickering people had apparently conquered and absorbed the Glen Meyer culture to the west,<sup>14</sup> and had initiated the Middle Ontario Iroquois stage which lasted for the next 100 years from 1300 to 1400 A.D. (See Diagram 1) There were two sequential but distinct cultural substages: The Uren, c.1300-1350, defined by pottery types, a poorly developed pipe tradition similar to the Early Ontario Iroquois stage, various gaming pieces, and so on;<sup>15</sup> and the Middleport, c.1350-1400, distinguished from the preceding by the existence

of an elaborate pipe complex, and tobacco smoking as a common habit similar to that of the Late Ontario Iroquois.<sup>16</sup> There was less concern for defence in the Middle Ontario Iroquois stage possibly indicating a stronger culture. Because more small camps and large villages of the second half of the century have been found, it is assumed that there was a definite population expansion in the Middleport substage. Large ossuary burials have been found in Middleport sites, along with traces of cannibalism.<sup>17</sup> The three important developments in this period were the growth of population, large ossuaries, and the introduction of the pipe complex.

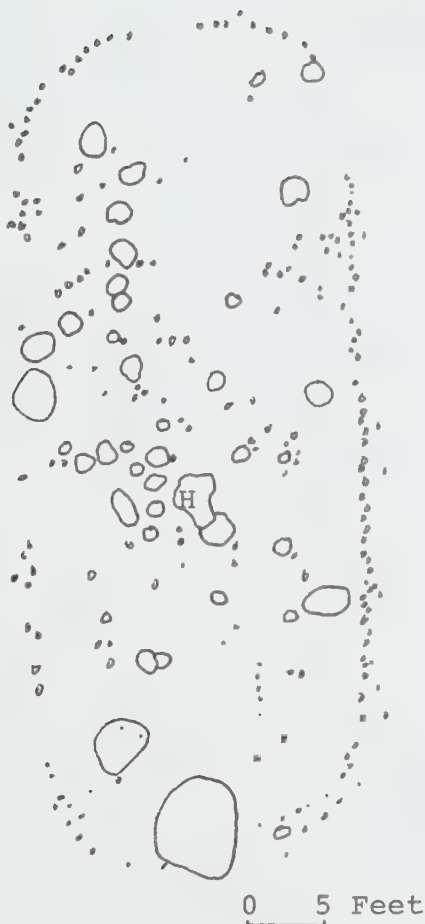
There are eight Middle Ontario Iroquois sites within the proposed community lines: Milroy, Brookwood, Garland Ossuary, F. Beare, Reesor, Woodland Park, Ken Reesor II and F. Barkey. (See Map 1) Although all should be tested further, there is a priority scale. The Brookwood site which has been known since the 1890's and the Milroy site, already excavated and known to be Middleport, and the Garland Ossuary dug in the 1960's are rated by Konrad as moderately unimportant. Ken Reesor II has already been excavated and assigned the 1300-1400 time period, but more can be done and therefore, is "moderately important", as is Woodland Park. F. Beare, Reesor and F. Barkey are considered important and therefore have first priority in this period.

The next stage--Late Ontario Iroquois--is not as simplistically subdivided as is its predecessor; and because these peoples were immediate ancestors of the tribes found by the French, their development and way of life is more familiar to us. The standard dates for the period are 1400-1650, during which time the Neutral-Erie and Huron-Petun peoples developed. The former group it is postulated, evolved from the Glen Meyer culture as modified by the Pickering invaders. The latter peoples, with whom we are concerned,





A. Webb Site House  
Initial Woodland



B. Bennett Site House  
Early Ontario Iroquois



C. Cornish Site House  
Historic

H - Hearth

Figure 2. Evolving house plans. From A. E. Tyyskä and W. A. Russell,  
"Once There Was An Island; Once There Were Islanders,"  
Mss. Ministry of Natural Resources, 1972.

descended from the Pickering culture.<sup>18</sup> (See Diagram 1) At first there was a southern (north shore of Lake Ontario and up the Trent and Humber Rivers) and a northern (Bruce, Grey and Simcoe countries) division based on pottery types. This lasted until c.1550 when a gradual blending and shifting began. These people lived in large (5-25 acres) palisaded villages, usually placed on promontories far from navigable water. (Cf. the Pickering culture, the similarity is obvious and the need for defence had returned after an apparently less contentious hundred year interval.)<sup>19</sup> A hypothetical explanation of the last developments before the French arrived is that the southern division, or Rock and One-White-Lodge clans, began moving north into the territory of the Bear, Cord, Deer and Wolf clans. Hostilities ensued and the Bear and Cord clans joined the southern group while the Deer and Wolf peoples moved west, and were identified by the French as the Petun while the other four clans made up the Huron. The difference in size between the two groups is reflected in the population estimates of 30,000 Huron living in 18-15 villages and 15,000 Petun in 10 villages.<sup>20</sup> These large villages were moved every 10-20 years because both the fire-wood supply and the soil would be exhausted. Shifting agriculture had become increasingly important over the centuries of Terminal Woodland development. For the Huron, corn was the staple. Beans and squash had appeared c. 1400 and these two additions created a diet nutritionally sufficient to reduce the need for game to supplement their corn-staple diet. A definite population increase followed which is evident from sizes of villages and ossuaries.<sup>21</sup>

There are three known Late Ontario Iroquois sites in the combined development area. The Draper and White sites, both in the airport area, were villages and as such, should be excavated before any development takes place. The Sewell site in Scarborough has already been described as Archaic,

(See Map 1) but on top of it are Late Ontario Iroquois artifacts indicating a double occupation site which obviously warrants careful attention and preservation. Besides the ten sites which can be dated to a particular substage, there are six which are known at this time to fall into the Terminal Woodland period. They are: Park, Burkholder, (Whitevale Road), Anthony, Deckers Hill, and Box Grove. (See Map 1) The first two are already partially destroyed and the third, although considered to be destroyed, has already been dug. These three should be tested further to insure that all that can possibly be salvaged has been. The last three are so badly mutilated that further work on them is not considered feasible.

The final known sites are: Stouffville, Simmons, Altona Road, Russell Reesor, George and Dixie. (See Map 1) At the moment, there is not enough information on any of them to assign a cultural tag. All but the last two which are destroyed should be tested to discover more information.

This, then, in brief, is what is known to date on prehistoric inhabitants of the combined development sites. The archaeological work done this summer under the auspices of the NPCDP has discovered more evidence of the earliest inhabitants, presumably of the same cultural groups as already found. A look at Map I and Figure 8 in Konrad's report shows the concentration of Early Ontario Iroquois sites in the Duffin's Creek watershed, and the Late Ontario Iroquois in the Rouge and Little Rouge watersheds. Such a concentration does not necessarily mean they were co-existing villages; since these people had to move their habitations several sites may represent the same group of people.

Another pattern concerning locations which emerges is the Indian's choice of land. The Archaic hunters followed



the steams and springs to be near water, but they stayed off the terraces, preferring the gentler slopes. Therefore, they had both a reliable source of water, which would freeze less readily than would larger rivers or lakes and no steep slopes to hinder their drawing water. As the population grew and warfare played such an important role, the Woodland peoples placed their villages by a "break-in-slope" (yet near water). This logical selection of living locations continued with added criteria as cultural evolution proceeded. There was always a marked propensity to choose well drained places, which would be "dry, safe from flooding and relatively free of insects". Agriculturalists appreciated that such soils dried earlier in the spring permitting a longer growing season. This requirement for well drained land meant that those who farmed sought certain soil types, particularly loam and sandy loam, avoiding clay soils both because of the drainage problem and the difficulty of working clay with their crude implements and methods.<sup>22</sup>

The Hurons who lived well north of the site, found themselves in a strategic position when the white man arrived. The French, coming down the St. Lawrence, saw the Hurons as the key to a fortune in furs. Those Indians had built up a trading pattern with Algonkins to the north and occasionally with the Neutral and Petun to the south and west. After the French arrived, this early trade pattern was a basis for an intermediary position between the French and the source of furs. Until 1640, the Huron trapped on their own land, but by that date they seem to have exhausted the beaver and had to rely on the Northern tribes for their supply.<sup>23</sup> The Iroquois, from what we know as New York, divided into the Five Nations (Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Seneca and Cayuga), had also exhausted their supply of beaver by 1640, and sorely needed access to a new supply. Therefore, they looked with displeasure on the Hurons as the coveted middlemen between themselves and the Algonkin providing excellent furs from northern Ontario.<sup>24</sup>

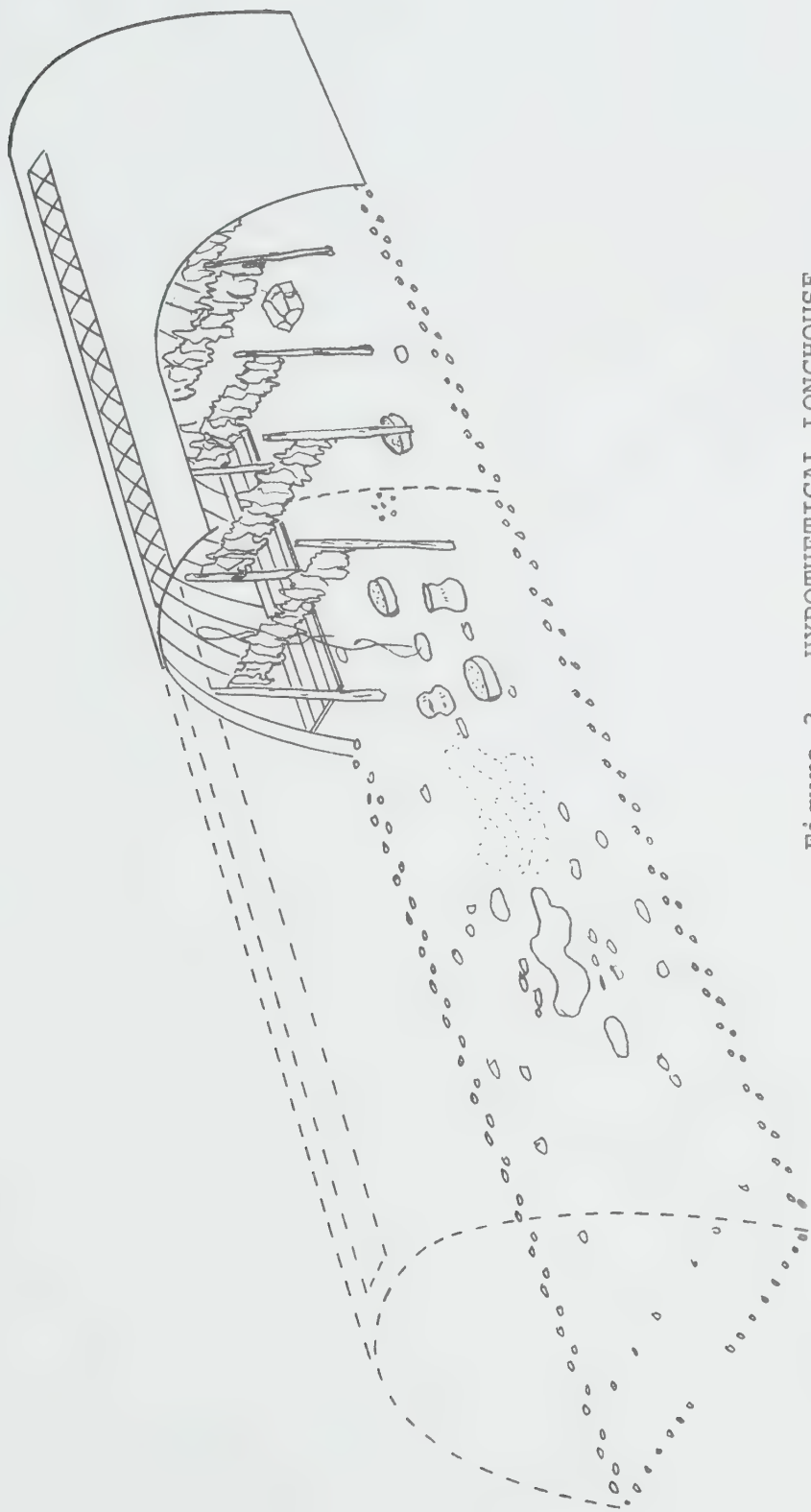


Figure 3. HYPOTHETICAL LONGHOUSE

"  
From A. E. Tyyskä and W. A. Russell, "Once There Was An Island,  
Once There Were Islanders," Mss. Ministry of Natural Resources,  
1972.

The French made an alliance with the Huron in order to assure themselves of the furs, while pushing missionary activity, first with the Recollects, and after 1632, with the Jesuits. It was one of Champlain's interpreters, Etienne Brulé, who, in 1615, was the first white man to travel through the Toronto area. Brulé was a hard man who explored a wide area of the continent, but he found little except disfavour from the Jesuit chroniclers of New France, because he was irreligious and actually lived as the Indians did. In the end, the Hurons killed him. He travelled through this area on his way from Champlain to ask the Huron's old allies, the Andastes, on the Susquehanna River, to join in a war against the Five Nations. Brulé and his Indian companions followed the westernmost of the two portage routes from the Holland River to Lake Ontario, that came down along the Humber valley. The other route went south-east from Holland Landing to the east bank of the Little Rouge River and down to Lake Ontario.<sup>25</sup>

From 1640 to 1649, the Iroquois attacked the Huron trying to take over the latter's position. At first, the Iroquois harassed travelling parties and attacked "border" areas but in the last two years, they struck at the heart of the confederacy, forcing the burning of the French center at Ste. Marie and for all intents and purposes, ending the evolution of the Huron. There were two main reasons for the Huron's collapse. From 1635 to 1639, a smallpox or measles epidemic wiped out more than half the population. The young who would have been warriors and the old who knew the traditions were hit the hardest. Therefore in the mid 1640's after the Jesuits had made a large number of converts, a split developed between the christian Huron and those who clung to the old pagan way of life. Such a division prevented a unified front being presented to the invading Iroquois.

Once the Five Nations had broken and conquered the Huron, they moved north onto their old enemy's lands.<sup>26</sup>

By at least 1665, there were six villages on the north shore of the lake. The Oneidas lived in Ganneious (present day Napanee); the Cayugas had built Kenté (Bay of Quinté), Kentsio (Rice Lake) and Ganaraske (Port Hope); and the Senecas had settled Ganadatsetiagon (Frenchman's Bay, See Map 1) and Teiaiaagon (mouth of the Humber).<sup>27</sup> These Iroquois built their villages near navigable water because they had no enemy to fear (or so they thought) and they wished to control the trade routes. The Seneca villages in particular demonstrated this for they were at the southern ends of the two portages that carried traffic between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe-Georgian Bay. When these trails were first blazed is unknown, certainly the Hurons used them and profited by them. The Toronto Portage is the best known today, for it lasted until Lt. Governor Simcoe's day, but the eastern trail is the one which interests us because it went directly through the townsite.

There are no maps extant which show the route of the trail as anything but a simple, direct line curving north and west toward Holland Landing. Possibly the trail went from the village of Ganadatsetiagon, along the watershed of the Rouge (not the valley) to the end of the Little Rouge, thereby passing close to a village east of Vandorf and going on to the east of Newmarket, and then, to Holland Landing.<sup>28</sup>

The Seneca made the most of their position in the fur trade. Although the French still sought to control the peninsula, the Iroquois traded heavily with the Dutch and their English successors. The Europeans came round the eastern end of the lake, to get the furs which the Seneca and others from the North brought down the eastern carrying-place. The French used the portage occasionally. We know



that the explorers Joliet and Peré<sup>1</sup> travelled it in 1669 on their way west to look for copper.<sup>29</sup>

French presence (and hopefully control) had to be made more forcefully felt so Governor Frontenac built a fort at Cataraqui (Kingston) to, among other reasons, discourage the English from going east around the lake to Ganadatsetiagon. This, the Governor of New France succeeded in doing; his rivals promptly went west round the Lake to Teiaiagon and the trade route shifted to the Toronto Portage. Even LaSalle in 1675 used the western route, for Teiaiagon had a better nearby harbour than Ganadatsetiagon. Assuredly, the eastern portage was still used by the Indians after the Europeans had followed the furs elsewhere. In the next century, we know that the Mississaugas used the trail and considered it important.<sup>30</sup>

For a short time, Ganadatsetiagon was more than just a marketing place to the French. In 1668, a mission among the Iroquois was given to the Sulpicians by the Governor. (The Jesuits hadn't tried to turn the Indians into Frenchmen; hopefully the Sulpicians would make the Indians more useful allies!)<sup>31</sup> The priests chose Quinté as the mission base because a delegation had come from that village to ask for teachers in their own country. Bishop Laval sent Claude Trouvé and Francois Fenelon to start the mission. They spent the winter of 1668 in Kenté, where much of their work concerned setting up a school to teach the children, with the ultimate intention of baptising them. The next year, Fenelon went back to Montreal and returned with another brother, Francois d'Urfe. A delegation from Ganadatsetiagon had come begging for a priest to teach their children, so Fenelon went west.<sup>32</sup> However, the winter of 1669 was frightfully severe and the missionary wore himself out following the villagers as they scattered to find food.

He felt himself to be a broken man in the spring when he went back to Kenté, and eventually to Montreal. No one replaced him,<sup>33</sup> and although Trouvé in a letter of 1671 or 1672 described the mission as encompassing three villages and scattered huts in between, which has been taken to mean Kenté, Ganaraske, and Ganadatsetiagon,<sup>34</sup> no other missionary is known to have visited the village near the mouth of the Rouge. Apparently, the mission itself was abandoned or turned over to the Jesuits in 1680 and the French definitely had left by 1687 when Governor Denonville led a major expedition against the Seneca on the southern shore of Lake Ontario. Ganadatsetiagon is mentioned as a resting spot for the French on the way back to Fort Frontenac. Christian Indians had been sent ahead and they had killed two hundred deer, the larger portion of which was welcome food to the French. The Seneca villagers who weren't Christian had definitely fled.<sup>35</sup>

The Seneca fled not from the French alone. During the 1680's, the Mississauga (an Algonkin tribe) began to move east replacing the Iroquois who were at odds with the French and the Ottawas from the north. However hard pressed the Iroquois may have been, they still made Lake Ontario extremely dangerous for any Frenchman from 1687 to about 1716. Consequently, we have very little knowledge of exactly what happened in the area. When the curtain lifts in the Eighteenth Century the Mississaugas were firmly in control of the western end of the lake. Trading with the English and the French continued; but Toronto had begun its domination of western Lake Ontario. Another village existed at the mouth of the Rouge, but when the French tried to establish themselves in the area again, it was by means of a permanent Magasin Royal succeeded by Fort Rouille on the banks of the Humber.<sup>36</sup> After the Seven Years War, European control passed to the English who continued sporadic fur trading in the Toronto area. During the American Revolution the Mississaugas remained neutral except to stand with the English against

Montgomery in 1775.

With the loss of the Thirteen Colonies and the resultant wave of immigrants the English had to prepare their territory west of Quebec for new settlers. As a first step, the British bought large tracts of land from the Mississaugas. In 1783, they purchased the area from Cataraqui to the Trent, followed the next year by the acquisition of the land west of Niagara and the head of Lake Ontario.<sup>37</sup> In 1788, the Toronto Purchase was concluded or so it was thought. The pact had to be confirmed in 1805 because Sir John Johnson left the Indian Department in such confusion that no one was sure what had been decided. The purchase was accepted as covering the area from the Etobicoke River to the current east boundary of East York and north 28 miles. As for the land between "Toronto" and the Trent, no records of a formal purchase have ever come to light. Although it is known that in 1788 Colonel Butler was negotiating for the lands between Toronto and Quinté; more than that we do not know. We can only assume that the area of the future townsite and proposed airport was legally acquired from the Indians.<sup>38</sup>

Settlement followed shortly after the purchases of land. Until the English had to think in terms of establishing towns and farms, the Europeans had seen the land only as the source of the fur pelts which brought great profit across the Atlantic. All but a few white men were content to live off the Indians in Ontario. But through their trade goods, the French and English changed the Indian's use of the country as distinctively as corn agriculture had done.

The Indians began as hunters and gatherers, choosing well drained land near a source of water upon which to live and taking their food from the forest. After corn became their staple, they chose their land more carefully, looking

for sandy or loam soil, but still keeping away from navigable water for safety's sake. Agriculture meant they cleared a spot in the forest, changing the landscape. The white man's steel axes made that job easier but in order to acquire the marvelous tools they had to denude the wilds of beaver.

When the indigenous peoples were replaced by those from the south the economic action had shifted westward. Furs coming from the Algonkin were the staple of the trade with the white man. At first one of the important trade routes went through our area, but it too shifted westward to the site of Toronto. When the Mississaugas sold their lands to the English the Toronto Purchase was a crucial one, but the sale of the lands east to the Trent went almost unnoticed.

The action had shifted westward, the beaver and probably a large proportion of other animals had been hunted to near extinction. The Indians had left the Rouge and Duffin's Creek for economic and political reasons. It was time for the English to move in.

#### FOOTNOTES - I

1. J.V. Wright, Ontario Prehistory (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1972), pp. 7-8.
2. Ibid., pp. 10-11, 13-15
3. Ibid., pp. 23-32.
4. All the data in this report on known sites, their importance and ranking for further work comes from V.A. Konrad, "The Archaeological Resources of the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Area: Inventory and Prospect." (York University, March, 1973), pp. 47, 133-147. Parentheses around a site name indicates that there is no "official" designation.
5. Wright, pp. 39, 71.
6. Ibid., p. 48.
7. Ibid., p. 44.
8. Konrad, p. 67.
9. Wright, p.67.



10. J.V. Wright, The Ontario Iroquois Tradition (National Museum of Canada, Bulletin No. 210, Anthropological Series No. 75; Ottawa, 1966), p. 13.
11. Wright, Ontario Prehistory p. 67; Wright, Ontario Iroquois Tradition, p.22.
12. W.A. Kenyon, The Miller Site (Occasional Paper 14, Art and Archaeology; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), pp. 17-32; Wright, Ontario Iroquois Tradition, p.52.
13. N.S. Ossenberrg, Osteology of the Miller Site (Occasional Paper 18, Art and Archaeology; Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1969), pp. 4-5; Kenyon, p.22.
14. Wright, Ontario Iroquois Tradition, p.22.
15. Ibid., p.54.
16. Ibid., p.55.
17. Ibid., pp. 58, 64.
18. Wright, Ontario Prehistory, pp. 74-5.
19. Wright, Ontario Iroquois Tradition, p. 66.
20. Ibid., pp. 79-81. Bruce Trigger states that Bear, Cord, Deer and Rock tribes (not clans) made up the Huron and were organized into a confederacy much like that of the Five Nation. I do not know which theory is the most accurate. B.G. Trigger, "The French Presence in Huronia: the structure of Franco-Huron relations in the first half of the Seventeenth Century," Canadian Historical Review XLIX, (June 1968), p.109.
21. Wright, Ontario Prehistory, pp. 75-78; Wright, Ontario Iroquois Tradition, p.81.
22. Konrad, pp. 37-9; V.A. Konrad, "Prehistoric Settlements in the Metropolitan Toronto Area" (Paper, Dept. of Geography, York University, July, 1972), pp. 1-2.
23. Trigger, pp. 111-12, 131.
24. Ibid., pp. 131-2.
25. P.J. Robinson, Toronto During the French Regime 1615-1793 (2nd ed; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), pp.6-9.
26. Trigger, pp.131-40.
27. Robinson, pp. 15-16.
28. Ibid., pp.53-4.
29. Ibid., p.20.
30. Ibid., p.54.
31. Ibid., p.17.
32. F. Dollier de Casson, A History of Montreal 1640-1672, trans. and ed. Ralph Flenley (London: J.M. Dent, 1928), pp.351-9.
33. W.A. McKay The Pickering Story (Pickering: Township of Pickering Historical Society, 1961), pp. 10-11.
34. Dollier, p.369.
35. Robinson, p.56.
36. Ibid., pp. 58-61.
37. G.M. Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years 1784-1841 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), p.5.
38. Robinson, pp.47-8, 168.

## CHAPTER 2

### EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

The arrival of the white man in large numbers, prepared to recreate a European style civilization, had an immediate and lasting effect upon the land, as it was divided into political units--first districts and then townships--with scant regard for physical boundaries. Further, these political divisions, once imposed, influenced the timing of settlement and the people who moved there. Once there, those settlers wrought new changes on the country, altering the landscape beyond recognition and using the resources as the Indians had never dreamed.

Sir Guy Carleton, Lord Dorchester, Governor of Canada created four administrative and judicial districts in 1788 around the north shore of Lake Ontario. What was to become Pickering and Markham lay within the Nassau District, or Home District as it was re-named by Simcoe four years later.<sup>1</sup> The counties (nineteen originally) were also created in 1792, but their sole purpose was to provide a skeleton upon which to create militia units and apportion representation. Until 1849, when they were abolished, the districts remained the governmental unit. The Court of Quarter Sessions for each district, made up of Justices of the Peace, was responsible for appointments of officials, erection of most public buildings, licensing, assessments, etc. The townships were allowed to have public meetings of householders which could choose a clerk, two assessors, collector, overseers of highways, fence viewers, poundkeeper and two wardens, but the only legislation allowed was that regulating the height of fences and if and when domestic animals could or not run at large. Not until the second half of the last century did the counties and townships take on their current significance.<sup>2</sup>

Settlement did not officially begin until the townships had been laid out. York was founded in 1793.

Yonge Street, Simcoe's military road designed to replace the Portage as the important link between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe--Great Lakes System, was started immediately. The surveying of York County was based on Yonge Street, which accounts for the strange pattern of lots and concessions. Since Yonge Street is approximately  $9^{\circ}$  off due North, the 1793 survey of Markham had to make the concession lines slant in a like manner. As the Pickering township lines run fairly accurately due north of the lakeshore, the Markham concessions had to be foreshortened so that Concession X assumes an inverted V shape with its lots getting smaller and smaller as they go north and Concession XI only lasts 11 lots and is called The Gore.<sup>3</sup> Scarborough was layed out over a period of years. Augustus Jones surveyed from Concession A to D in 1791; I through V were finished in 1793-5. Since the north boundary with Markham was already set, the surveyors found themselves with a short fifth concession comprising lots of only 60 acres instead of the usual 200 (also called The Gore).<sup>4</sup> Pickering was surveyed in 1791 by Jones as well. Originally, the broken lots by the shore were too large due to an error in setting his base line near the Scarborough/Pickering line north of the shore. A correction had to be made in 1799.<sup>5</sup> Uxbridge wasn't surveyed until 1804-5 by S. Wilmot.<sup>6</sup>

The patchwork method of surveying the townships as well as the less precise instruments of the time and the thick forests insured numerous mistakes in the surveys. For years, the government of Upper Canada had to deal with letters of complaint, and petitions concerning discrepancies in the boundaries of lots. In 1865, doubt arose whether lot 12, Concession X, Markham, was actually in Concession XI (present maps have only 11 lots in Concession XI as opposed to 14 in the early patent maps). John Oliver bought lots 8, 10 and 11 in the Fifth of Scarborough or so he thought. It turned out

that the land was actually in the Fourth and others claimed it. It took ten years of court disputes, eviction, burning and petitions before Oliver received restitution (£400) for the faulty survey.<sup>7</sup> However faulty and haphazard the laying out of the townships was, the pattern, as set then on the site, has not yet been changed. The township lines influenced the sequence of settlement, instead of simply spreading out from the core of Muddy York immigrants clustered round core areas in each township. These cores were not selected by any government. They developed from the spots chosen for varying reasons by the earliest settlers. These pockets of settlement slowly expanded until the township line was reached. Occasionally, they spread over township lines. But basically, the township boundaries have remained more than political and administrative divisions. They also represent historical and cultural differences which are still felt in the area.

Scarborough and Pickering were surveyed first because Lord Dorchester, having decided that the foot of the Toronto Portage was a likely spot for Upper Canada's capital, ordered the adjacent township fronts laid out. However, Markham was the first to be settled. Once Simcoe had established York and laid out Yonge Street the push for development was north along that major road.

Linked to the opening of Yonge Street was the Berczy settlement in Markham. Briefly, for they located west of the site, William Berczy's group of Lutherans came over from Germany to New York state in 1793. Once there, it was learned that the land could only be leased, not bought, so Berczy made inquiries with Lt. Governor Simcoe about the possibilities under the British crown. Simcoe was only too willing to grant land to eager industrious immigrants, and 64,000 acres in Markham from Yonge Street east were offered to Berczy. By



September, 1794, a somewhat smaller acreage of Concessions II-VI had been surveyed and granted if Berczy would undertake to make Yonge Street viable for wagon traffic (in other words, hack the road out of the wilderness), and if he would clear the Rouge River for navigation, and improve the old trail. In the early days, the River was navigable to approximately Lot 6, Concession III in Scarborough.<sup>8</sup> The settlers (about 186 people) were artisans and farmers and Simcoe also expected them to help construct York. They built a village in the Third Concession "German Mills" consisting of saw and grist mills, a brewery, malthouse, blacksmith and cooper's shops. But from 1797 to 1802, there was a good deal of quarreling over the validity of Simcoe's grant and the settler's deeds (the Lt. Governor had returned to England), Berczy went bankrupt, and the great problems of pioneering in a hard land took their toll. The Berczy people as a unit did not prosper greatly, but a hard core remained in Markham to swell the population of British who had also settled along Yonge Street. The importance of the Berczy people to the site area is that they had some influence on the Mennonites' selection of land in the east end of the township.<sup>9</sup>

The migration of the Mennonites to Markham was a part of a larger movement of people. The "Plain Folk" or "Plain People" were any or all of several religious groups, only a few of which were related: Mennonites, Amish, Dunkers (or Tunkers), Brethren in Christ, Quakers, Hutterites and Huguenots. The range of religious views among these sects was wide, but the similarity of plain dress and plain way of life created a resemblance in attitudes and reactions to the outside world. Only the first group settled in the site; some Tunkers bought land in other parts of Markham township,<sup>10</sup> and the Quaker centers in Pickering and Uxbridge were also outside the site boundaries.

The Pennsylvania-Dutch Mennonites had come from the Lower Rhine to Pennsylvania in the first half of the Eighteenth Century. They sought freedom to live as they chose, to escape religious and economic pressures. Many left the United States for the same reasons. Being pacifists, the Mennonites had stayed out of the American Revolution. When the war ended, they doubted if they could continue to live in the new country. The primary question was whether they could get exemption from military service. Under British rule, they had been confident of freedom to practice their religion unhindered by society's demands and restrictions. The new American government did not offer such assurances. Moreover, these people were farmers by tradition and conviction, which meant they needed sufficient land available for acquisition as their families grew. Land in Pennsylvania was scarce and expensive, up to \$150 per acre by 1819.<sup>11</sup> The new land opening up in British territory offered them the security they sought. Simcoe had issued a proclamation in February, 1792, which was advertised in the American papers, offering 200 acres to immigrants who would improve it by clearing 5 acres, build a house and open the road allowance in front of their lot for a quarter of a mile. When Simcoe left in 1796, the offer was officially void, but the publicity had done its work. Drawn by the promise of guaranteed religious freedom and adequate land, the Mennonites came between 1796 (the Whiskey Rebellion was probably the last straw) and 1812, when American immigration was halted by the war.

The earliest settlers had gone to Niagara, and some had settled near Yonge Street in York County. Between 1800 and 1802 fourteen families had moved to land around the Grand River in Waterloo County. They bought their lots from Richard Beasley who had a mortgage on the land. This they didn't realize until the end of 1802 and the knowledge halted further

Pennsylvania German migration to that county. Beasley's mortgage and the resultant question of clear title would have been bad news to anyone but to the Mennonites, it was anathema. It took a couple of years to clear up the problem and in the meantime, the flow was diverted back to York County--Vaughan, Whitchurch (7th, 8th and 9th Concessions) and Markham. Reverend Henry Wideman came to the Eighth Concession in Markham in 1803.<sup>12</sup>

There is no specific evidence to link the Pennsylvania German movement into Markham with the Berczy Germans (who were for the most part Lutherans), although there is a tradition that Peter Reesor came to York in 1796 to investigate possibilities of land.<sup>13</sup> If he came, he would have heard of, and possibly talked to, Berczy settlers. Therefore when he got home the prospects in York County could have become general knowledge. However that is supposition. The most that can be said is the Berczy settlement opened Markham up and provided a stimulus.

Unlike many immigrants the Pennsylvania Germans were not looking for free Crown grants. They had the money to buy and there were many who wanted to sell. Speculators, large and small, owned most of the non-reserve land in the townships around York. Thus, settlement by Pennsylvanians was scattered throughout the townships as they bought land where it was available. Some names which are familiar "old pioneer" families within the site now, such as Wideman, Barkey, Hoover and Burkholder, originally established themselves on lands in other parts of the township. The Marrs had arrived in 1801 on Concession IX and Jacob Miller, a Baptist from Erie County, but not German, got lots 21 and 22 in the same concession in 1796. (Map II has lot and concession numbers.) Between 1803 and 1807, the crest of the wave arrived including, besides those mentioned above, Heise, Kindy, Eyer, Troyer, Wismer, Lehman, Schunk, Musselman, Oberholzer, Mishler, Stover, Boyer, Casper, Shirk and of course, Reesor. The Nighswanders didn't

come up from Maryland until 1824. Mixed in with these Plain Folk were New York Dutch: DeGeer, Van Horn and Vanzante.<sup>14</sup>

While Markham was flourishing, Scarborough was getting off to a very slow start. A Scottish stone mason, David Thomson, was the first man to settle in the township near Highland Creek on the First Concession. His brother Andrew and friend James Elliot settled nearby. But those who followed were few in number and centred in the middle of the township or near the Kingston Road. Besides the fact that speculators held much of the land, leaving few Crown lots open except Reserves, the Bluffs at the lakeshore restricted<sup>15</sup> the transport available. In other words quick, easy and cheap water transportation, which was crucial before roads, decent or not, became widespread, did not exist for early Scarborough residents. Markham offered Yonge Street and Pickering had a decent harbour, but Scarborough had just the Kingston Road which, until after the War of 1812, provided easy transportation only in theory. Consequently settlement in the northern corner of Scarborough was delayed until the 1820-30's. Being so close to the Mennonite center of Cedar Grove, there was an overflow of Reesors into the Fifth Concession eventually, but basically the settlers were of English and Scottish stock.<sup>16</sup> (See Map II)

Europeans moved into Pickering slowly, and contrary to what one would expect, far from the lakeshore. The reason was that former army officers and government officials were given large grants of land in blocks in the southern part of Pickering, not scattered throughout the township as was the common practice. Major Smith, his son David William, Acting Surveyor-General, John Beverly Robinson, Elmsley and others were not going to break up their holdings in the early days just to sell a lot here and a lot there to farmers. As long as there was free land available and Reserves to rent, these speculators couldn't get top price. Therefore, with the



exception of leases on Reserves hardly any one owned individual lots south of the Fifth Concession until after the War of 1812. Those who did settle were mostly American, it was not until after 1816 that the wave of British immigrants started; so that it was in the 1820's and '30's that Pickering filled up. Basically, there was an even mix between English, Scots and Irish with a couple of Welsh families, but the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth were heavily Scots, the western lots were picked up by the second generation of the Pennsylvania Germans to farm and the Ninth Concession to Altona was heavily Mennonite. (See Map II) The population centres were Duffin's Creek, the fifth-sixth concessions and Brock Road, and what was to be Claremont. Our small corner of Uxbridge was not settled heavily until the 1830's too, as it was at the far end from the first Quaker settlers in the northeast corner at the present town of Uxbridge.<sup>17</sup>

Acquiring title to free land was a long process, more often than not spread out over some years. First the prospective owner petitioned for land. This petition to the Land Board was passed on with a recommendation to the Government, which then issued an Order-in-Council granting a specific number of acres to that person. The Surveyor-General issued a Location Ticket and entered the name on the plan of the township. From there it was up to the settler to take possession and perform the settlement duties (clear, fence and plant 5 acres within 2 years, build a house at least 20' x 18', occupy it in person or via a deputy for a year, and clear one half of the road allowance in front of the lot). Once these were done, the grant would be confirmed and the owner could sell, bequeath or assign the rights to this land. Finally he applied for the patent giving him clear title. Various "small fees" had to be paid the officials at certain stages in this process. General Hunter insisted that all fees be paid in one lump sum when the Location Ticket was secured so that there

was little delay until after 1810 in obtaining patents once the settlement duties were performed. However, when the fees were collected separately for each service many settlers left the last step of getting their patent until it was absolutely necessary or they had the time and money to go into York (or Toronto) to complete the process. Because of the length of this procedure exact dating of original settlement is not easy. The Order-in-Council indicates when a person obtained a definite interest in a lot or lots, but the Location Ticket marks the time when he could take legal possession. The certificate of settlement duty performed is the best indication by far of when he or a deputy started clearing and living on the land, but relatively few certificates have survived. The granting of the patent could represent a much later date than that of original settlement.<sup>18</sup>

Who could receive a grant? Loyalists from the United States, men who had fought for the Crown against the Revolutionaries, some government officials, and those who undertook special tasks, were eligible. The Berczy settlement was an example of the last type. The U.E.L. grants were to heads of families who were fugitives and their children. Since that definition threatened to be all encompassing, General Peter Hunter, Administrator, revised the U.E.L. list in 1802 to cut off those who arrived after July 28, 1798. Lt. Governor Francis Gore relaxed the restrictions because of the clamour of those left out. The military grants (which devoured most of southern Pickering) went on a sliding scale: privates were allowed 50 acres, non-commissioned officers 200, subalterns, up to 2,000, captains up to 3,000 and field officers up to 5,000. These lands were not supposed to be given in blocks and not all men got or took the entire amount. Government officials were allowed land by Russell to compensate them for the hardships engendered by the

capital moving to York: the high cost of labour and servants compared to the low salaries. Officials also specialized in acquiring loyalist rights to land sold by U.E.L. children.<sup>19</sup>

The Reserves were lots retained by the government to be leased. One seventh of the lots in each township were held as Clergy Reserves, and another seventh as Crown Reserves. The government's policy was to rent them to finance the established church and government operations respectively. Twenty-one year leases were granted.<sup>20</sup> Much has been written about this policy of holding back land from sale as having been injurious to quick and contiguous settlement of the province. It was a commonly held belief that the Reserves, scattered as they were through the townships, divided initial settlement and hampered communication. However, it seems that no generalized statement can be made concerning the effect of the Reserves on settlement. The conditions varied from township to township. But because Reserve lands could be rented easily, free land was still available into the 19th century, and when those government lands were taken, speculators began to sell; the average settler could get land, one way or another, relatively easily. The Reserves had little effect on the quick settlement of Markham and they alone enabled scattered clearings in southern Pickering.

A settler needed three things: courage, stamina and enough money to get started. Even if he received a grant he needed money for tools and livestock. A pair of oxen, with yoke, logging chain and harrow would cost in 1835 close to £20, a cow and a couple of pigs £8, and a year's supply of staples about £22.<sup>21</sup> This didn't include the cost of erecting buildings and clearing land. If one bought a lot, it most likely cost upwards of £100.<sup>22</sup>

U.E.L.'s were given implements and supplies and the Pennsylvania Germans always brought cash with them, as did many

other former Americans. However, many people arrived with no money or very little. Some squatted on unclaimed land or free Reserves. They might not be molested for years and they could sell the improvements (acres cleared, buildings erected) to the rightful owners, or even buy the lot themselves if it came up for sale. However, the site area was too close to York and official scrutiny for many squatters to survive. A large percentage of the British immigrants who arrived in the 1820's and 1830's had to work for others in order to get enough capital to start on their own. They would work as labourers in the towns, lumberjacks, school teachers, domestics or hired hands. The latter might get some land or stock from their employer in lieu of cash wages. Another practice was share-cropping. The owner of a lot provided the oxen, implements and seed and split the resultant yield in half with the sharecropper. This system was better for the owner than hiring labour to clear land and a good way for the poorer man to get started.<sup>23</sup>

In our society's mad dash to salvage its past, the strains of continuity in settlement, families or buildings which have remained on the same land for generations have often been overemphasized. This element of staying power was important but much of the province--Pickering and Scarborough included--was opened by perpetual pioneers, people who would not or could not settle and put down roots, who always moved to the frontier, which meant townships well north of Lake Ontario in the 1840's and '50's. These were the people who when they had

cleared their farms and brought them into that situation in which the mere farmer would consider them just fit to begin to live on, they become dissatisfied with their lot, they do not relish the different kind of labour which the altered state of their farms require, and they long for a new settlement--for the excitement of chopping, logging and burning brush.<sup>24</sup>

These restless people epitomized the worst of the white man's effect on the country. They cleared the land, took from it



and returned little or nothing.

The pioneer locating on land never touched by man was faced with an incredible task which took years. First the statutory five acres or more had to be cleared of trees. A logging bee or an experienced woodsman could cut and burn the trees, or the settler could girdle the trees and wait for them to die.<sup>25</sup> The first method was preferred but it was still a lengthy process and one had to know how to chop and fell the trees in order to facilitate burning and logging.<sup>26</sup>

To carry on his clearing and farming, the backwoodsman had a limited stock of tools and implements--axes, spades, shovels, hoes, forks, sickles, scythes, and flails, mostly of American manufacture or made in imitation of American models. His only real labour-saving implement was an A-harrow. This was constructed of heavy timbers framed in a triangle for convenience in passing between stumps. It had nine or more iron teeth, each about an inch and a half in diameter, and tipped with steel.

When he had the trees removed from a few acres, the backwoodsman planted his first crop. With a hoe much resembling a heavy adze, or even with an axe, he cut holes in the turf for his potatoes. Though he did not even hoe them throughout the summer, he was certain of a good return from them in the days before the late blight, and he knew that the ground would be left in good shape for a succeeding crop. Turnips, too, did well on new land, even when it was low and wet. Indian corn, the stand-by of settlers to the south, was not satisfactory in any but the westerly parts of Upper Canada, because it was often destroyed by frost before it could mature; nevertheless, patches of it, with the accompanying squashes and pumpkins between the rows, were characteristic of the backwoods landscape, for they would at least provide roasting ears, as well as green fodder for the livestock. If he came to his lot in the spring, as he usually did, the backwoodsman would have no other

crops, for he had to spend too much time in building, fencing, and cutting surface drains through turf and roots to clear any more land. Then, in the autumn, to obtain a little cash for tea and other necessities, he would sow some wheat broadcast on the unstirred ground among the stumps of his summer logging-fallow, and scratch it in with his harrow. With the wheat, he might sow timothy or red clover seeds, or a mixture of them, but this he did not always do, as a crop of white clover or of red top, a native grass relished by cattle and sheep (though not by horses), would appear spontaneously the next year anyway. The second year, he might sow wheat where the potatoes and Indian corn had been the first. He sometimes sowed wheat after wheat, but this was not considered a good practice, as the crop obtained would be too rank in the straw. Preferably, he chopped and logged enough each year to be able to harrow wheat into four or five acres of new land, and left the older clearings in hay or pasture, or sowed oats or rye or buckwheat in them. Buckwheat was supposed to have the merit of "taming" the soil for a future crop of wheat. In four or five years, weeds and seedlings would overrun the clearance, but by this time the roots of the stumps would have decayed sufficiently to admit of ploughing. The ploughing was of a kind which horrified British travellers, for the backwoodsman merely worked his primitive implement around the stumps, in and out, backwards and forwards, till, somehow or other, he got the soil moved. Then he harrowed it, and sowed wheat. For another four or five years he repeated the procedure, till even the large roots of the stumps were well decayed. Then he hitched his oxen to each stump in turn and jerked it out. If some of the roots were still sound he utilized a simple lever or even a screw. As an alternative he could set fire to the stumps, which did not decay. Such was the course of the backwoodsman in the early days of Upper Canada, and such it continued to be as long as there were wooded areas being settled.<sup>27</sup>

No wonder Susanna Moodie implore gentle folk to refrain from

rashly committing their money and energy to clearing a bush farm.

Obviously the primeval forests of the New World were deplored and detested by white settlers. They prized cleared land, yet they also learned how to use the timber. The trees told them what kind of soil was beneath.

Land, upon which black and white Walnut, Chestnut, Hicory, and Basswood, grow, is esteemed the best on the continent. That which is covered with Maple, Beech, and Cherry, is reckoned as second-rate. Those parts which produce Oak, Elm, and Ash, are esteemed excellent wheat-land, but inferior for all other agricultural purposes. Pine, Hemlock, and Cedar land is hardly worth accepting as a present. It is however difficult to select any considerable tract of land, which does not embrace a great variety of wood; but, when a man perceives that Walnut, Chestnut, Hicory, Basswood, and Maple, are promiscuously scattered over his estate, he need not be at all apprehensive of having to cultivate an unproductive soil.<sup>28</sup>

Once they started to clear, the timber was a resource as well as a hindrance. Foremost, of course, it was a building material (the prime material unless one was so unlucky as to have stoney land). Burning the hardwood timber produced potash as an early cash crop. Moreover, the animals harboured by the forest provided food, and one could sell hides and furs.

The self-sufficient settler using only materials found on the land in a manner not unlike some Indians hardly ever existed. The farmers were self-reliant, learning how to make use of so many raw materials, but almost from the beginning the settlers were linked to the cash economy that was western civilization.<sup>29</sup> Profit was a prime motive, whether it was the professional pioneers who wanted enough to start all over again or a farmer hoping to "make a killing" in wheat.

Closely tied with the European movement onto the land was the establishment of mills to facilitate the production of usable and marketable goods. Saw mills, grist mills and eventually woolen mills sprang up. At first, they were a rare necessity. Pioneers would walk many miles along Indian trails with a sack of wheat on their backs to get it ground into flour. Sometimes an entrepreneur would build both a grist and a saw mill near each other. Flour mills were less numerous than saw mills because they entailed a three story structure while the latter needed only a basic shack to cover the saw. Saw mills proliferated madly because they were easy to construct and there were ample supplies the miller frequently combined that work with farming. On the West Duffin's Creek there were, at one time or another, twenty water powered mills and one steam mill. Four of these were grist mills and two were woolen mills. Grist and saw mills represented the first tangible signs of progress from subsistence farming towards an industrial economy.<sup>30</sup> People settled around mills; indeed, seven villages on the site grew up around mills: Cedar Grove, Glasgow, Altona, Atha, Green River, Whitevale and even Brock Road started out with a mill. And in Whitevale's case the early mills provided a base for more small industry.

But such industry located in structures was not the primary support of the economy. Farming played a crucial role, since so many people depended upon it for a living. When a farmer had approximately a third or half his land cleared and most of it free of stumps ready for ploughing he considered it to be a proper farm. From the 1830's on to the late 1850's or early '60's, the period in which the site area was completely settled, wheat was the primary crop. It was exported to England and the United States. The effects of "wheating" could be seen in the bigger and better barns that this type of farming required, the clearing of extra land that it encouraged, the fine houses of the 1850's and '60's and also the fields worn out from



continuous, indiscriminate cropping of wheat. However, the market for Ontario wheat collapsed, at first briefly in the early '50's, and then definitely by the '60's. The mid-western United States and later the Canadian prairies took over the market, in large part because the western farmers were still working virgin soil.<sup>31</sup>

From this orgy of wheat Ontario farmers turned to more varied farming. Barley was an important export to the States from the 1860's to the 1880's. In 1864, the first cheese factory was started and the dairy industry was born. Farmers had taken their excess butter and cheese to the local store to barter for decades, but the growth of the factories, which were often organized on a cooperative basis, changed this casual increment to family income into an important market product. Certainly by the 1890's, the industry had become much more complicated. The growth of urban centres offered a steady and growing domestic market for dairy products which in turn encouraged winter dairying. The quality of livestock improved markedly after the 1850's. The early stock were poor and scraggly; they were usually left to fend for themselves so the hardy natives were prized above "soft" purebreds. However, some pioneers such as the Millers of Pickering began importing seed stock from Great Britain: Clydesdales and other draft horses, Shorthorns and better dairy cattle and various breeds of sheep and pigs. Some farmers, such as the Grahams of Claremont and the Millers, specialized in stock breeding.<sup>32</sup>

This diversification of agriculture cushioned, but did not prevent, farmers from feeling the depression of the mid 1870's, the recession in the 1880's and the depression in the following decade. These economic troubles effected the land, for farmers frequently turned to the bush still left on their land, usually about one third of the total acreage, to supplement their incomes. In the last third of the century woodlots

steadily diminished to supply cordwood and the smaller sawn logs which became acceptable as the larger trees near settled accessible areas vanished. The final result at the end of the century was a countryside with fewer trees than ever before or since, as the planting of shade trees and wind breaks had not begun in earnest. (See the picture of Whitevale in 1877 - Figure 7.) Not all farmers treated their bush so cavalierly. The Pennsylvania Germans nursed their woodlots. They were not careless about trees, an attitude which one can still see on the site.<sup>33</sup> Other scattered farmers husbanded the trees as well as the soil.

Rural depopulation, that much discussed development, began in the 1870's. People went west in droves and moved to the cities. Farms were abandoned or the land was added to other farms and the buildings allowed to deteriorate slowly. Fewer farm labourers meant an increased reliance on machinery. (Essentially, the pattern for the 20th century was set: mixed farming with dairying and some stock breeding, and a small population reliant on machinery.)

The rule that for every generalization there is an exception certainly applies to the site area (in respect to the above overview).

Exhaustion and erosion of the soil would be found only in a few small areas and on individual farms, but the practices intended to correct them were adopted very early. The dependence on one type of crop had never been complete... The area certainly shared the agricultural depression responsible for the setting up of the Royal Commission on Agriculture of 1880-81. However, the kind of mixed farming, with specialization in one line or another, that was being substituted for grain-growing, had already made considerable progress in the Toronto region before that date. The introduction of cheese factories in 1866 had rather less effect in this area

than in most of the Province. Some factories like those at Whitevale [and Cedar Grove] were built, but they were never very numerous. The dairy farmers of the area already had some market for whole milk as well as butter and cheese. Creameries were found in one or two villages in the 1880's [Locust Hill]. The farmers already had a good local market for their beef, pork and mutton before 1860. The keeping of sheep grew less common, for very little of the area was especially adapted to it. The local demand for horses, horse-feed and hay was already considerable when other parts of Ontario began to turn, in the 1880's, to horse-breeding for the American market. When the electrification of street railways reduced the demand about ten years later the need for dray-horses and delivery horses in Toronto was already very great. The thousands of horses in the city continued to require great quantities of feed and bedding.<sup>34</sup>

The close proximity of Toronto also encouraged poultry raising as well as truck gardening.<sup>35</sup>

The complex problems of farming encouraged farmers to join together in self-improvement groups in the second half of the Nineteenth Century which changed into self-help groups aimed at combating the hostile world. From the 1840's on farmers' clubs were organized either in districts or townships. They were spontaneous organizations of like-minded people meeting to discuss problems, news and politics. Occasionally they might try cooperative buying. We know there was such a club in Markham in 1874 for the record of a meeting in the early summer has survived at which fencing was the topic discussed. It met the first Saturday of every month and was considered to be one of the most progressive in the province. Almost all such clubs had disbanded by the 1880's.<sup>36</sup>

These clubs are not to be confused with the district and township agricultural societies. These groups represented somewhat more formal, establishment institutions. The earliest

district societies resembled the philosophical societies of the Enlightenment in the home country with the leading political and social figures, landowners certainly but hardly farmers, as members. The Home District society was one of the more active, sponsoring an exhibition shortly after it was founded in 1830 and trying to procure several seed bulls from New York state. Apparently Whitby and Pickering townships had a society by 1838 but it must have dissolved by the later '40's because the Pickering Agricultural Society was founded in 1850; the Scarborough Agricultural Society had been organized in 1844, and the East Riding of York and Markham Agricultural Society followed Pickering in 1855. These societies had government subsidies from 1830 on, and encouraged the improvement of husbandry via ploughing matches, fairs and occasional importation of seed and stock.<sup>37</sup>

Such groups provided opportunities for social gatherings and a forum for introduction of new machinery, seed and stock, but they did not cope with the farmer's problems vis-a-vis the rest of the country. From 1874 to the 1900's a series of semi-political and political associations of nation-wide or province wide appeal tried to cope with the farmer's increasingly second-rate position in the industrializing economy. The Order of the Patrons of Husbandry, better known as the Grange, was imported from the States in 1874, flourished until 1880 after which it declined rapidly to a shadow. It was a fraternal order, interested in improving farm techniques and concerning itself with the economic position of the farmer, which developed into cooperative buying in order to avoid that *bête-noir*, the middleman. The movement refused to involve itself in politics but did try to further the farmers' interests.<sup>38</sup> The Order of the Patrons of Industry, brought over from Michigan in 1889, succeeded the Grange as the popular forum for grievances. Its goals were broadly the simplification of government and



an end to the National Policy of high tariff, artificial monopolies, and subsidized railroads. Like the Grange, the Order would not enter politics officially, but did try to lobby for its interests; however, sixteen Patrons were elected on the Order's "platform" to the Ontario Parliament in 1895. Their goals were too negative and narrow for them to keep and enlarge any sizable constituency, so by 1898 the movement had basically collapsed.<sup>39</sup> There was a Grange association in Brougham until 1880 and a Patrons of Industry group started in January 1891 (and presumably died out by the end of the decade).<sup>40</sup> The next farmers' movement to touch the site area was the United Farmers of Ontario. It was based on individual clubs of the Farmers' Institutes, started by the Mowat Government in 1885, which went independent and merged with some cooperative organizations and Granges in 1917. Cooperative buying to avoid middlemen was an important policy and a co-op operated in Locust Hill until 1923. The U.F.O. formed the Provincial government from 1919 to 1923 and passed a good deal of social legislation but the site area did not elect a U.F.O. member.<sup>41</sup>

As important as farming was in the last century, the 1800's was also an industrial epoch. Starting with the grist and saw mills the industrial base expanded until every hamlet in the site had some sort of industry. This was a nationwide phenomena of course, but limited by three factors: the early dependence on water power which did not vanish when steam mills were introduced, the use of natural materials of wood, stone and clay bricks for construction, and wood, grain and wool for production, and the limits early transportation put on distribution of goods.<sup>42</sup> The mills and factories which developed were excellent examples of the European use of natural resources on a large scale (relative to some other cultures) to produce natural materials. It was an expanding

process. The saw mill spawned planing mill and sash and brush factory; blacksmiths often operated a carriage works; grist mills needed cooperages. But when the technology changed and became more complicated, the small mills and factories could no longer compete.

The transportation problem plagued rural Ontario for decades. The first settlers had used old Indian trails which followed the topography. Roads they opened to mills frequently went by the natural features too. However the settlers' roads gave way to the roads surveyed with the lots. As more lots were taken up, the road allowances cleared for settlement duty began to link up and the present grid road system emerged.<sup>43</sup> It is a "logical" creation imposed upon the land which served the needs of farmers to communicate with each other. However directness was (and is) not its strong point. The process of creating an easily travelled road took decades. In 1821, Phoebe Roberts, making a tour of Quaker meetings with several other friends found travelling an incredible hardship. Going from Duffin's Creek west

Timothy Rogers hitched his horses in our wagon, our men rode our horses, two friends took axes and went several miles with us and found work aplenty; we got staled in the swamps many times--we had to walk some... Travelled 10 miles.<sup>44</sup>

Roads which resembled the term as we conceive it didn't exist until macadam came into general use. Corduroy or logs placed across the road, made an excruciatingly bumpy ride, and planks, while much smoother, deteriorated quickly.

The Kingston Road started as Danforth's Road, named after Asa Danforth who got a contract in 1799 to open a road from York to the east (a continuation of Dundas Road). He followed the line surveyed by John Stegman getting as far as Smith's Creek (Port Hope) by November of 1799. There were

numerous complaints about the quality of the highway--hills were too steep, bridges were collapsing and sections were badly overgrown. Instead of improving Danforth's Road, the Cornwall or Front Road was opened in 1804 and quickly replaced the earlier road except in a section of Scarborough. Heavy traffic during the 1812-14 War confirmed the general preference for the Front Road over Danforth's, and it was repaired after the war and called Kingston Road.<sup>45</sup> The Brock Road was most likely based on an Indian trail. It was officially opened in 1808-9 as part of a system to connect the Quakers in Pickering, Uxbridge and Whitchurch. By 1829, the section from Duffin's Creek to Uxbridge was called the Brock Road because it continued on to Brock and Thorah townships.<sup>46</sup>

When the railroads came, they provided quick and reliable transport. The Grand Trunk went south of the site in 1856. The first tracks to cross the site area were those of the Toronto and Nipissing (CN) in 1872 across the north-west corner of the proposed airport site. The Ontario and Quebec (CP) cutting directly across the site was opened in 1884. The Campbellford, Lake Ontario and Western (CP) was built through south central Pickering in 1912 to cope with increasing freight traffic east. It closely parallels the old CN route of the Canadian Northern Ontario Railroad which was built in 1911 from Toronto to Ottawa and was closed down in the 1930's. The lines were very important in providing access to markets for the farmers. They played their part in social activities too; train excursions from the city to the country were very popular. A special Ontario and Quebec train used to bring people from Toronto to the Cedar Grove garden parties.<sup>47</sup>

The small villages were industrial, commercial and social centres. Rural Ontario differed little in its social development from urban centres--church, school and fraternal orders (such as the Ancient Order of United Workmen, the

Independent Order of Foresters, the Freemasons, Canadian Order of Home Circles, and the Independent Order of Oddfellows) as well as shared work brought people together. In the early pioneer days, the loneliness of the clearings was thankfully alleviated by working bees. The organization of early churches fulfilled a social as well as a religious need. Not so much in terms of status or fashion, but rather in creating a group of people, usually within a certain geographical district, who shared similar interests and experiences. Church and school were frequently linked. At first physically, because the early log school was used by one sect or another before they built their own house of worship. Then the school offered social contacts which interwove with those of the churches.

The largest percentage of the population were non-established Protestant. The Anglican Church never prospered in the backwoods settlements, because the Church of England needed a cultural heritage and social distinctions upon which to superimpose itself. The pioneers in the bush had broken with the personal and class ties of the Old World and needed to construct anew. Moreover they desperately needed an emotional outlet. Therefore the evangelical and semi-evangelical sects were welcomed,<sup>48</sup> and Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Bible Christians and Christians flourished. As important as the churches were, it is pointless to discuss each congregation on the site in detail. Some will be mentioned in the chapters on each township which follow; all past and present churches in the site are shown on Map IV.

Besides the social functions, the churches engendered, the suppers, Sunday School picnics, garden parties and recitals, the religious groups had a definite influence on that missionary-cum-practical movement: temperance. There is no doubt that drink was one of the most serious problems of backwoods Canada and of the society in general. Elections



were excuses for orgies of drinking and the number of taverns in each village or the number of inns which constituted a hamlet was incredible. The earliest temperance societies were started in the 1830's (Pickering 1830, Scarborough 1832). The movement continued on in various forms into this century. Most villages of any size had a temperance group. The emphasis was not on prohibition but on persuasion and voluntary moderation or abstention. As Susanna Moodie said:

Drinking is the curse of Canada, and the very low price of whisky places the temptation constantly in every one's reach. But it is not by adopting by main force the Maine Liquour law that our legislators will be able to remedy the evil. Men naturally resist any oppressive measures that infringe upon their private rights, even though such measures are adopted solely for their benefit. It is not wise to thrust temperance down a man's throat; and the surest way to make him a drunkard is to insist upon his being sober. The zealous advocates of this measure (and there are many in Canada) know little of their own, or the nature of others. It would be the fruitful parent of hypocrisy, and lay the foundation of crimes still greater than the one it is expected to cure.

To wean a fellow-creature from the indulgence of a gross sensual propensity, as I said before, we must first convince the mind: the reform must commence there. Merely withdrawing the means of gratification, and treating a rational being like a child, will never achieve a great moral conquest.<sup>49</sup>

The average meeting involved the opening prayer, business minutes, an address or sermon, and a discussion.<sup>50</sup>

So the Europeans adapted the land to their own needs and values. The process was slow, but with farms partially or completely cleared, a grid road network superimposed on the landscape, factories and large barns reflecting the use of resources, the white man had put his stamp upon the land.

FOOTNOTES - 2

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CHAPTER 3  
MARKHAM-SCARBOROUGH

MARKHAM

The preponderance of Plain Folk among the early settlers of Markham distinguishes this township from the others cut through by the site boundaries and also aligns the township with a few others, as unique within the whole province. The people came up from the States, bought available land and eventually acquired a large proportion of the lots in the area to be developed. Four hamlets grew up -- Cedar Grove, Belford, Locust Hill and Mongolia. Although they are no longer bustling centres, the families who settled there have tended to stay.

An uncommonly large number of extant certificates of settlement duty performed enable us to date with some accuracy the movement of Europeans into the area on a permanent basis. From 1803 to 1817, most of the free lots had clearings made and buildings erected and the bulk of this had taken place by 1809. Most of the Reserves were leased in the first two decades of the century. In the Ninth Concession, Alexander Whaley bought the clergy lease to lot 2 from Michael Shank in 1828, and it stayed within the family until well into this century. Colin Drummond was granted lot 3 in 1804 and it was bought by Peter Reesor in 1805. Reesor had acquired Lot 4, his homestead, in 1804. Apparently he performed the settlement duties for James Osburn, the original grantee, which was a normal practice. Lots 6, 7, 10 were acquired by Peter Stover and Christian Reesor shortly after they were patented by others. In 1801, Joseph and William Marr were granted lots 12 and 14 respectively and John Marr must have taken lot 13 at the same time although he didn't patent it until long after the other two patented theirs. But the Marrs didn't stay there for long; by the 1820's they had started selling the land off.

Over the next fifty years the Reesors acquired a sizeable portion of lots 1-15. Lots 16 and 17 were Reserves which went to the famous George Miller in 1839/40 and formed the basis for his extensive stock breeding farm. Moses Gamble, who married into the Reesors, took a lease on Crown Reserve lot 19 in 1805. Peter DeGeer did the same for lot 20 in 1817. The Joshua Millers who leased in 1803, bought in 1838/9 and then divided, lot 21 and 22 were not related to George. The two families owned most of 16-22 during the rest of the century. George Boyles was granted lot 23 in 1801 and had settled by 1804. Peter DeGeer leased the Clergy Reserve lot 25 in 1803 and was granted the next lot in 1801. Garret Vanzante bought 29 from C. Drummond and was settled there by 1806. The DeGeers and Vanzantes stayed in the same area they had first established themselves, and some Hoovers, Barkeys and Burkholders moved into the northern lots.

To digress to Concession VIII: No. 25 was granted to James McGregor in 1802 but by 1810 Jacob Barkey had it. Lots 27 and 28 were taken by the Keysingers and eventually sold to other Pennsylvania Germans, 29 to Absalom Sommers, to be divided up later; and 30 was leased to N. Kurtz and later bought by Francis Pike and H. Wideman.

The ownership of the first lot in Concession X was disputed, because John Diver who had completed his settlement duties in 1817 was deprived of the land for disloyalty during the War of 1812. The important date was 1834 when Robert Milroy from Scotland bought it. His descendents still own two thirds of the lot. Henry Lapp bought lot 2 shortly after J. Campbell patented it in 1804, and the Lapp family took part of the old Clergy Reserve lot 3 in the 1850's; there they have stayed. Peter Reesor, whom one could describe as land hungry, bought No. 7 from Alexander Legg in 1815 and turned three quarters of it over to his son-in-law Ira White who built

a prosperous grist mill. William Armstrong acquired 150 acres in lots 9 and 10 (Clergy Lease and Grant) from Samuel Reynolds, a U.E.L., in 1844 and the family still farms the land. Across the road, J. Wurtz had the settlement duties in lot 13 done in 1805, one year before he took out a lease on Crown Reserve lot 12. Colonel William Button, J.P., Gentlemen, bought part of lot 11 in 1846, and subsequently acquired parts of the two lots north. The Hagermans who have the St. Claire Arabian Horse Farm are Button descendents by marriage. Isaac Westbrook had settled lot 14 by 1805 when Christian Reesor the patriarch of the Reesor clan bought it. His widow, Fanny, also got the lot to the north. Lot 18 was cleared by Joseph Burris for Isaac Swaine before 1816; he was granted it in 1829 but sold four years later to the Madills, from Ireland who located in both Pickering and Markham. They kept part of No. 18 for at least the rest of the century. Christian Reesor bought 22 from Rachel Graham in 1817 and it stayed in the family, as the next lot stayed in the Hoover family after Daniel bought it in 1819. Barkeys and Nighswanders bought land around what was to be Mongolia. Christian Pickley or Shipley or Stickley, a Tunker was granted the 150 acres of lot 28 in 1805 (he had paid his fees three years before) but the family didn't stay. Perhaps he moved closer to his brethren in another part of the township. John Boyles had eastern parts of lots 27 and 28 on which he had a saw mill, the first one north of Cedar Grove. The Widemans and Kesters moved into lots 29 and 30.

The small parcels of lots in the Eleventh Concession changed hands frequently. Reesors had and kept the bottom two lots. Lots 3 and 4 went from Peter Reesor to J. Schenk and back, after a short interlude, to Benjamin Reesor. Henry Major bought the Clergy Reserve 8 in 1855, upon which a store had been built but he sold the operation to J. Boyd.<sup>1</sup>

The preceding paragraphs contain only a representative sampling of the people who settled and farmed this part of Markham. One can try to portray the characteristics of the settlement by listing those people and families whose names reappear time and time again because of their scattering through the area or maintaining ownership of some land for an extended period; but the local knowledge of everyone who lived there, and, more important, the relationships of individuals with their neighbours is beyond the ken of outsiders. It can only be approximated by such listing as above and by describing the villages which were scattered at regular intervals. Rural Ontario revolved around the cyclical life of the farm and around the villages, large and small, which contained the link with the rest of the culture. It is for that reason that the villages are discussed in some depth with asides on farmers or events outside their boundaries.

#### Cedar Grove

The hamlet of Cedar Grove developed out of the mills set up on the Little Rouge. Dates of the erection of mills are usually unknown or only guesswork to one or two decades so that nobody knows when Peter Reesor built his saw and grist mills except that they were standing by 1817. The grist mill, a three storey frame structure was not torn down until the 1920's. Robert Milroy had built another saw mill where the river crosses the townline in the late 1830's or early 40's; he sold it to John Reesor in 1845 and a Reesor ran it until 1924 when it burned down. David Whaley built a saw mill sometime before the Tremaine map of 1860 was issued. David Lapp had a saw mill in the 1860's; and Ira White had his saw and grist mills by 1860 too. Two grist mills in such proximity required a cooperage which was located between the two of them on the side road.<sup>2</sup> (See Map III)



The omnipresent blacksmith shop was opposite Peter Reesor's mills; with a carpenter shop diagonally across the street; an inn with the post office to the south, a store on the west side of the road, south of the mills, which disappeared by the end of the Nineteenth Century; and another store which burnt down in the 1940's, and the Red House Inn on the northeast corner of the sideroad intersection. The Lapp Brothers Cider Mill has existed since 1870/1, but a cider mill could well have been functioning before that. The 1853 assessment lists Tom McKnight, tailor and James Henderson, shoemaker. The tailor's shop wasn't torn down until the 1920's. A cheese factory operated on the sideroad through the Ninth Concession. An advertisement in the Markham Economist of July 17, 1856 for a confectionary run by Messrs. Blazer and Harrington indicated that there was imagination and variety in that part of the country, but the enterprise apparently didn't last long, for the ad disappeared, never to return.<sup>3</sup> Such was the "industrial base" of Cedar Grove. Given the number of mills it seems strange that the village did not become an industrial centre such as Whitevale. Expectations were high for Cedar Grove in the 1850's and '60's but a solid diversity of "secondary" small shops and stores never developed to give the village the population and variety that would have distinguished it from a farming community. Probably the proximity of Markham village limited opportunities for Cedar Grove's expansion.

But Cedar Grove was and is more than its transitory industry, because its population has not been transient. The Reesors, Milroys, Dimmas and Lapps found good soil, and well husbanded it provided a decent living. Although the Reesor family grew and spread, Cedar Grove was always a central point for them because of Peter Reesor's homestead which stayed in the family until thirty years ago. For those Reesors who remained Mennonite, the Steeles Avenue Church and the Cedar Grove Church



PLATE 1. The Cedar  
Grove Blacksmith Shop.

FIGURE 4. Advertisement  
of the short-lived  
confectionary in Cedar  
Grove.

BLAZER & HARRINGTON  
CONFECTIONERS  
Cedar Grove, Markham

Blazer and Harrington are now prepared to furnish merchants and others in Markham and the adjoining Townships, with every description of CONFECTIONARY, wholesale, at the lowest Toronto Prices. Their Confectionary being manufactured under their immediate supervision may be confidently relied upon as being of the very best description, and free from that adulteration practised in so many establishments.

Blazer and Harrington

Cedar Grove July 10, 1856

From Markham Economist, July, 17  
1856, p. 4.

were lodestones. The Presbyterian church was formed by Dimmas, Lapps, and Milroys among others. In such an area, where everybody knew everyone else and their grandparents, the bond that creates a community was strong. This stability in the makeup of the community is characteristic of the section of Markham within the site; in contrast to Pickering which has only scattered pockets of long time residents.

The congregation of the Zion Presbyterian Church erected the present building in 1890 to replace the 1856 frame church. For several years before that date and some years afterwards a mammoth lawn social was held each July to help pay for the building. First at the home of Mr. and Mrs. David Reesor and then at Mrs. James Dimma's, these garden parties attracted people for many miles. Torontonians came out on the train and were let off at the bottom of the Reesor's lane and in 1890 eight extra cars were needed. This old tradition was resurrected by Cedar Grove to support a new tradition. The Cedararena, a community skating rink, was started 46 years ago on it's present site. The community had collectively used various mill ponds since the 1870's but this "artificial" rink required funding; so the people of Cedar Grove revived the old Garden Party from 1928 to 1962 with entertainment from Markham and Toronto. After television changed tastes in entertainment the local people went back even further in their history, to the original Pennsylvania German heritage and created the popular Apple Butter Festival.<sup>4</sup>

### Belford

This was a tiny hamlet. In the 1850's there were two licensed inns on lot 8. Tremaine's map has a store (and post office) in the 8th on the townline. This was the Major property already mentioned, bought by Boyd which also apparently had a shoemaker's shop upon it. To the north at the top of the Gore was the Maple Leaf Hotel and south of

the store was another inn. The time sequence of these commercial enterprises serving human necessity is not clear.<sup>5</sup>

### Locust Hill

Locust Hill on lots 10 and 11, Concession X grew up around the Ontario and Quebec Railroad station which went into operation in 1884. Before that date the community existed in terms of S.S. 21 with the school house, first on lot 15, IX and from 1864 on lot 13, X, and the Tenth Line Methodist Church built in 1855/6 on land donated by William Reynolds (next to the cemetery). In 1890, the present church structure was erected. (See Map IV) Under the corner stone were "deposited copies of current issues of "The Globe", "Mail", "Empire", "Economist", "Sun" and "Pickering News". No coins or bills were deposited as the trustees thought they would serve better in circulation".<sup>6</sup>

The railroad put its station next to Colonel Button's farm by request of area residents. In 1882, the president of the railroad announced that the line would consider applications for location of stations from people living along the line. The criteria was to be proof that there would be enough traffic to make the operation pay. Consequently a group of interested businessmen and farmers from Green River and Whitevale met in April, 1882 to plan such a presentation. Obviously the point was well made.<sup>7</sup>

The railroad was the major transportation link for south and central western Markham and the central-western portion of Pickering. Not only did it provide transportation for goods produced by factories in Whitevale and Green River; it also gave the farmers easy access to transportation for their produce and supplies. A cooperative creamery on the south side of Highway No. 7 was started in 1893, then was purchased by Albert Reesor and continued until 1942/3. (See Map III) Between



1919 and 1923 a cooperative buying group of Markham and Pickering farmers operated under the auspices of the United Farmers of Ontario. They didn't have a warehouse but would buy a carload of supplies wholesale and divide it.<sup>8</sup>

The railroad attracted varying commercial activities. A grain elevator was built by P.R. Hoover and William Armstrong in 1887. Several years later those two enterprising gentlemen established the Markham Mutual Insurance Company based in Locust Hill but Armstrong sold out shortly after it started. The Standard Bank of Commerce had an office in the store building c. 1915.

The present general store structure began as a temperance hotel as well as store. Belford offered sufficient opportunities to get drunk; so a house for sober folk was opened by the Nighswander Brothers. In 1886, the Post Office was located there and Locust Hill was officially on the map. At first it had been called Green River Station, but when the post office was opened the name had to be changed to avoid confusion and the name of the Armstrong farm - Locust Hill - was chosen.<sup>9</sup>

The station meant more than economic prosperity. The speed and comparative surety of the railroad over horse-drawn vehicles on mediocre or poor roads opened up to rural residents the world beyond their immediate vicinity. It offered the opportunity for those who were seeking an escape to break away from a limiting pattern, and brought to those who were content, the realization of that which existed outside their daily routine. Not only was Toronto easily accessible, but travelling long distances no longer meant great hardships. "Manitoba Fever" struck Ontario in the 1880's and scores of young men went west via the railroad. They went for adventure, for jobs or to start a new life. A large proportion of these young bucks came back to Ontario--either pulled back by respon-

sibilities at home or pushed back by bad luck. The resulting sense of the wider world did not drastically alter their daily routine centering around one or two villages, but it did give them wider terms of reference.

## Mongolia

As one can see from the segment of Tremaine's map reproduced below, this hamlet was a crossroads affair.

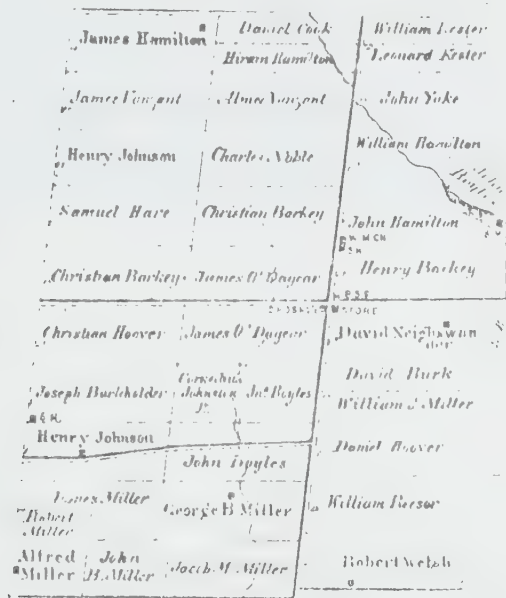


Figure 5. Mongolia and surrounding farms in 1860.

The store built by Mr. Crosby burnt down in 1920; Crosby's Hotel (later known as Bell's) was consumed by fire in 1870 and replaced in 1890 by the house which currently serves as Cowan's store; the blacksmith had a wagon shop next door; and a Mr. Thornton once ran a cobbler shop on the Tenth. The present ex-schoolhouse in 27, IX was built in 1882 to replace the pre-1860 structure denoted above. The Wesleyan Methodist Church was torn down after 1877 and moved to the Ninth Concession. When Tremaine did his map the settlement was known as California. The name Mongolia was chosen when the post office opened in 1865.<sup>10</sup>

In the east half of lot 23, IX, which the Boyles family farmed from 1801 to 1894, a plot on the high ground east of the stream was used as a cemetery. The dates on the gravestones, which are now set all together in cement, range from 1816 to the 1890's. The names are those of non-Mennonites of the area, such as Kester, DeGeer, Johnson and Miller, as well as Boyles.

On 18th Avenue between the Ninth and Tenth Lines, there was a large stately elm about which two conflicting stories are told. Some say that in 1812 the militia went there for instructions. A flag was put on the top and spikes were driven into the trunk to prevent it being cut down. The story I prefer has it that in 1837 McKenzie's supporters put his flag atop the tree and used it as a rallying point. They put the spikes in to prevent the opposition cutting it down.

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The Mennonite presence in Markham is muted now. None still insist on shunning modern technology and few dress in the old style. From the family names one can trace the influence of the Pennsylvania Germans, but the names do not necessarily indicate adherence to the "old faith". A distinction exists between Mennonite heritage in terms of those families which have retained that faith and the heritage of the Pennsylvania Germans. Frequently they overlapped, but not always.

Apple butter and apple schnitz (dried apples), sausage and sauerkraut are associated with Pennsylvania Germans. North American bank barns developed in Pennsylvania out of German and Swiss influences, and the two large Reesor stone houses are Pennsylvania Dutch rather than Georgian. A special concern for trees was linked with their appreciation of good husbandry. There was (is) also a mystical streak in these people. Fire Papers could (and did?!) prevent barns from burning and certain people were and are known for their ability to cure illnesses, which stumped doctors, by the use of charms. A charm could be the use of something specific or a prayer. Mrs. Dorothy Duncan was cured by a farmer's wife of a skin rash about which



PLATE 2. The house  
Christian Reesor,  
younger brother of  
Peter, built.

PLATE 3. The Reesor or Steeles Avenue Mennonite Church.  
The 1857 building was renovated in 1950.





the medical profession could do nothing. Mrs. Reesor took Mrs. Duncan into a room by themselves, put her hand on an area where the rash had come out and said, "Now bow your head. We are going to pray about this." The lady prayed for several minutes and Mrs. Duncan was sceptical throughout the entire experience. Then Mrs. Reesor said, "It's going to take about four days before this will start to clear up," and that was that. Approximately a week later, the rash began to clear; within two weeks it was gone. Mrs. Duncan said it was no question of her having faith; she didn't. Absolutely no remuneration was expected by Mrs. Reesor.<sup>12</sup>

The Reesor family has had a dominating influence because of numbers and the fact that the "patriarch" and his eldest son settled in Locust Hill/Cedar Grove. Christian Reesor came north from Franklin County Pennsylvania in 1804 with his six children. Christian was first generation North American as his father had come from Germany to Philadelphia in 1739. Peter, the eldest son, seems to have been the man of affairs. He had come to Canada in 1796 and 1802 to look for land. The last trip was unexpectedly profitable. He met a former Hessian officer, Frederick Baron De Hoen, who had 600 acres by Crown grant in Whitchurch. The good Baron had no desire to pioneer in the Canadian backwoods, he wanted to get a ship home. To get to a ship he needed transportation so he sold his 600 acres to Peter Reesor for the Pennsylvanian's horse, saddle and halter. De Hoen rode to his ship and Reesor walked home carrying the bridle which was not included in the transaction. (A bargain is a bargain.) This perhaps whetted Peter's appetite because he acquired land steadily once the family settled. Another possible reason for his lust for land was a need to insure that the family had enough lebensraum.

Peter was head of the family after his father was killed by a falling tree in 1806. (This was a definite hazard;

Reverend Henry Wideman died in the same manner four years later.) Peter and his brother Christian built large two storey stone houses which are still standing, with black walnut trees in the front yards (which are not). They must have been well off financially to have built such houses, because from 1807 to 1853 houses were assessed by their material, stories and number of fireplaces. The first act had six categories: round log; square timber, one storey; square timber, two stories; framed under two stories; brick or stone of one storey with no more than two fireplaces; and brick or stone of two stories with no more than two fireplaces. Additional fireplaces were taxed. In 1811 the first class was dropped and the highest category became frame, brick or stone of two stories. The assessment ran from £20 to £40 for the first four categories and jumped to £150 for the last, which was dropped to £60 in 1820. Stoves counted as fireplaces.<sup>13</sup> Stories were counted from the front view of the house, hence the popularity of one-and-a-half story houses.

A little over fifteen years after people began settling Cedar Grove they built their first public building a school-cum-church on lot 1, Concession XI. Both the Mennonites and Presbyterians worshipped in the log structure which was typical of the good relations which have existed between the two religious groups throughout the history of this area. The Mennonites remained on the property, replacing the log building with a frame church in 1857. A schoolhouse had already been built in 1850 on the sideroad opposite the current school-turned-community centre. (See Map IV) The church stood beside the graves on the townline, a rectangular structure, the long side facing the road with two doors similar to the old Mennonite church in Altona. In 1950, the building was moved to its present location, turned around and added to. It is still known as the Reesor or Steeles Avenue Church and represents one hundred and fifty three years that piece of land has been

used for religious purposes by the same group.<sup>14</sup> The Cedar Grove Church started as a structure built in 1861 by Samuel Reesor as shelter for those attending funerals at the union cemetery; then seven years later the property was deeded to the Mennonite Church for preaching and burial purposes. In 1889, a major division over doctrine occurred among the Ontario Mennonites. The Wisler faction wished to continue along traditional lines and it controlled the Steeles Avenue Church, so the modern group took over the Cedar Grove structure.<sup>15</sup> This situation is mirrored in Altona for both of the older Mennonite Churches in these two villages were on an early circuit which consisted of the Wideman Church on the Eighth Concession in Markham, Altona, southeast corner of Markham (Steeles) and Edgeley in Vaughan.<sup>16</sup>

#### SCARBOROUGH

The northeast corner of Scarborough which the North Pickering Project slices off is neither fish nor fowl, being only part of the area known as Hillside. With the exception of school, a church and three saw mills, the twenty two lots were devoted to farming. The closest commercial enterprises were at Cedar Grove or Malvern.

The land was originally granted to about half a dozen different people who for the most part had other lots scattered throughout the township. The Fourth Concession had been patented in the 1790's, the usual date for early grants, but the Fifth Concession remained Crown land until the end of the first decade of the next century or later. A large proportion of those people who bought from the original patentees stayed in the area for the remainder of the century or longer, which partially accounts for the retention, until recently, of so much land as family farms.

In Concession V, Peter Reesor got lots 1 and 2 in 1812 and they've stayed in the family. Lot 3 was patented by Benjamin Eaton in 1812 and eventually bought by a McCreight, kin to the McCreights of Cherrywood in 1834. They stayed on that lot and on lot 11. Various Reesors settled on lots 4, 5 and 7. After John Oliver's unfortunate experience with lots 8, 10 and 11 (notice he was doing basic clearing as late as 1840) James Clarke lived on 8 and 9 legally for at least 50 years and built the pretty frame house.

Lots 1-2 and 4-5 were owned by two members of the Small family and lots 8, 10 and 11 by John White. Joseph Collins bought the south half of lot 1 in 1837 and the family stayed there for the rest of the century. The Beare's of Beare Road acquired the southern half of the next lot in 1854. John Reesor bought the next lot over from the Canada Company in 1831 and it remained in the family (of course!). Peter Boyer bought the south half of lot 4 in 1847 and constructed a saw mill on the Little Rouge. J. Diller acquired the property in 1871 along with the south half of lot 3. The Pearse cousins settled on lot 5 in 1848 and '52 and stayed. John Sewell (of Sewell's Road) acquired part of lot 9 from the Canada Company in 1834 and steadily bought more land in the area. Peter Milne built his saw mill on lot 8 shortly after he acquired the south half of the lot in 1840. The Milnes and Sewells divided the rest of the lots we are interested in amongst themselves.<sup>17</sup>

Two of the three saw mills in this section were short-lived. Boyer's mill was probably set up shortly after he bought the land in '47, but it seems to have been inactive by 1878. The Atlas of that year shows the mill pond only. It was the same with George Pearse's saw mill next door. Built after 1852, gone by the 1870's. Only the Milne mill lasted into



this century. This ratio of survival was not unusual as there was not enough timber left by the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century to supply all the mills originally built.

Strangely enough the local red brick schoolhouse has survived. At first the school was located on the townline and served Pickering too.<sup>18</sup> Then the current site was bought from J. Diller in 1872 and the Hillside Public School is still functioning in its original capacity. This section of Hillside had strong links with Cedar Grove. That was the post office address, the nearest store(s), taverns and Mennonite and Presbyterian churches. The Methodist congregation comprising residents of Scarborough and Markham built the Hillside Methodist Church in 1877 on lot 7, Concession III on the south side of Finch Avenue, so the township boundaries in this neighbourhood were (and are) not a decisive factor.

Markham is distinguished from the other townships making up the site not only by its history of settlement, but also by the heavy concentration of Mennonites who established themselves there and put down strong roots. The Plain Folk kept to themselves in many ways, for instance, they didn't join farmers' groups. This was partly due to their philosophy, and partly a logical consequence of the rural inclination to base community relationships--economic and social--on the church, which obviously set them apart from their neighbours to some degree. Farming, small, very basic industry and the railroad provided a living, and the first is still of some import. The section of Scarborough cut off by the new town is only part of the original "community" of Hillside--its ties are with Cedar Grove to the north and the rest of Scarborough to the south and west. As such it is best described as a collection of farms. The important historical happenings were to the north, particularly in Cedar Grove and Locust Hill.

FOOTNOTES - 3

1. AO, Abstract Index to Deeds, Markham, Vol. A; Township Papers, Concessions 8-11; Assessment Rolls, Markham, 1853-5.
2. Rouge, Duffin, Highland, Petticoat Valley Conservation Report 1956, Table following p.117; P. McClennan, Ladies Please Provide (Cedar Grove: 1967), pp. 6-7, 43.
3. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Simeon Reesor, Feb. 17, 1973; McClennan, p.5; Interview with Austin Reesor, Apr. 11, 1973; Markham Economist, July 17, 1856, p.4.
4. McClennan, pp.26-30.
5. Assessment Roll, Markham 1853-5; Interview with Frank Johnson, March 9, 1973; Markham Economist, Jan. 7, 1875, p.3, March 12, 1874, p.3.
6. Interview with Mrs. A. Armstrong, March 27, 1973; "Historical Sketch of Locust Hill United Church", p.4.
7. Beaton scrapbook, Pickering News, May 5, 1882; P. Berton, The Last Spike (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), pp.33, 298.
8. Interviews with Mrs. A. Armstrong; Austin Reesor; Mr. and Mrs. Howard Turner, Dec. 20, 1972.
9. A. Armstrong, "Historical Sketch of Locust Hill, " address presented to York Chapter of Pennsylvania - German Folklore Society of Ontario, Nov. 29, 1963.
10. Mrs. E. Taylor and Mrs. Barchull, "A Glimpse into the Early Life at Mongolia", Stouffville Tribune, April 24, 1958.
11. E. Arthur and D. Whitney, The Barn (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), p.85.
12. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Duncan, Dec. 19, 1972.
13. V.B. Blake and R. Greenhill, Rural Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1969), pp. 24-5.
14. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Simeon Reesor.
15. L.J. Burkholder, A Brief History of the Mennonites in Ontario (Toronto: Livingstone Press, 1935), pp. 107, 119-20, 198, 200.
16. AO, Journal of Simeon Reesor, 1860-4, entry of June 3, 1860.
17. AO, Abstract Index to Deeds, Scarborough, Vols. A and B; Township Papers, Scarborough, Concessions 4-5.
18. D. Boyle, ed. The Township of Scarboro 1796-1896 (Toronto: 1896), p. 187.

## CHAPTER 4

### PICKERING - UXBRIDGE

#### PICKERING

The first white inhabitant of Pickering township is something of a myth. An Irish fur trader named Duffin is said to have lived by the stream that bears his name in the late 1780's.<sup>1</sup> His cabin was always open to travellers, one of whom found the door ajar, signs of a struggle and blood on the floor. Duffin was never seen again. Ten years later another trader (turned farmer), William Peak, located at the mouth of Duffin's Creek. He was the first known settler of Pickering.<sup>2</sup>

Analysis of the pattern of permanent settlement of Pickering is greatly hampered by the relatively few surviving certificates of settlement duty performed. However, certain aspects are clear. A small number of absentee owners possessed a large percentage of the township, and they did not sell in any quantity until the 1830's. There were scattered leases in the south half before then, with the earliest actual settlement taking place in the northern half. In 1803, a town meeting of Whitby and Pickering householders was held, at which there were only about ten members from Pickering and most of these men were leasing lots.<sup>3</sup>

In the north, several people were settled in the Ninth Concession as early as 1808. Christian Siefert swore the settlement certificate for lot 35 owned by Isaac Wismer in 1808 and bought the south half the next year. Much the same happened with lot 33. Alem Marr of Niagara had 5 acres cleared on his lot 32 by 1813. Lot 30 was sold to Abraham Stouffer in 1809 with "all houses, outhouses, wood and water thereon". Jacob Clock was granted lot 29 in 1802 but his settlement duty wasn't done until 1823. Lots 21-28 belonged to the Crown and George Law, and were consequently not settled until the

'30's. Joshua Wixson performed the tasks for lot 20 by 1812. Of these early settlers only Wixson and Marr remained. By the mid-century, a number of Pennsylvania German families from Markham were moving into the western lots and others from Uxbridge and concessions to the south took up the area between Altona and Claremont.

The Wixsons (there were two brothers) expanded into the Eighth Concession in the '30's at the same time as William Michell located on lot 23. Lots 31 and 32 had clearings early, in 1804 and 1811 respectively, but no one settled permanently at that time. Lots 29-35, (excepting 32) were at one time heavily Pennsylvania German. Lot 32 was settled by Nathan Bentley, brother to William Bentley of Brougham.

Joshua Wixson also improved and purchased lot 20 in the Seventh Concession by 1811 and he cleared part of 25 before he purchased it in 1830. There was a definite Scottish element in the early pioneers in this concession. Reverend George Barclay, came in 1816. (He settled just outside the site boundaries on lot 16, but bought land to the west.) John Miller (lot 17) and his father William Miller (lot 25) started farming in this concession in 1839; John Bell bought his land in 1844, A. Spears in '45 and J. Whitson in 1857. Thomas Gostick from England bought the southern part of No. 24 in 1836 and the family still farms the land. Of course, the end lots were finally acquired by Markham families.

Thomas Matthews, U.E.L., was not an absentee owner. He settled on his lot and three-quarters, 17 and 18, Concession VI, shortly after he received the grant in 1799. The family prospered only until 1837. George Barclay bought lot 19 in 1819 and the family stayed on the north half. Clergy reserve, lot 20 had been improved by John Clark (1818-26) before James W. Sharrard leased it in 1826. Sharrard had already bought No.



21 in 1818 and the family remained there for the rest of the century. Lot 23 was patented by Caleb Palmer in 1805 after settlement duty was done by David Thatcher, who bought the lot in 1806, then sold it all by 1816. A mixture of English and Scots as well as a Hoover and a Barkey located permanently in the '30's and '40's in this section of the Sixth Concession with the Barclays and Sharrards.

David Crawford, Quaker, had a house, barn, road allowance and 15 acres cleared on lot 17, V, in 1805. He patented it in 1807, but by the mid-century was selling. John Major, U.E.L., was granted No. 18, but he waited until 1828 to patent. He sold the lot off in bits and pieces and the family concentrated farther west on lots 26 and 30, IV and by the West Duffin's Creek. Lot 19 was patented in 1821 to Thomas Hubbard who had probably settled there about fifteen years earlier. No. 21, Crown Reserve, was leased to John Staats in 1817 but he didn't seem to have stayed. Nathaniel Hastings, of Loyalist stock, settled on lot 24 in 1828, upon which he built a fine stone house approximately twenty years later. His descendents sold the farm only a few years ago. Aaron Albright had 50 acres cleared of Clergy Reserve lot 25 when he offered to purchase it in 1836, so he must have been there for some years. William Turner from New Brunswick bought No. 29 in 1841 and his descendents farmed it until 20 years ago. Ira White bought the Major property on the Creek and surrounds in 1857 for his son Truman P. and other Markham families expanded into lots 34-5.

David Crawford leased No. 16, IV from the Crown in 1807 when he patented his lot to the north but he didn't buy it subsequently. Philip Staats leased the clergy lot 20 in 1817 and Levy Von Kleeck rented No. 27. Obviously there was a small Dutch settlement for a time. The Pughs from Wales have owned lot 26 since 1842 and the Majors built the house on

No. 29 which they still occupy. Reesors bought the western lots.

Hardly anyone settled the Third Concession until the late '30's. People moved in from other parts of the township, such as the Hubbards from the north to lot 17 and Cowans from the south to lot 18. The Ashbridges owned part of 22 from 1806 until this century but there is no evidence of the date they moved onto the land. Jacob Shanks and David Clark had parts of 27 and 28 in the '30's and '40's and they both built mills, saw and grist respectively. James McCreight bought the south half of 30 in 1841 and named his farm Cherrywood. Robert Garland, another Irishman, bought 33 in 1842 and spread out from there. (He was as avid for land as Peter Reesor.) Burkholders, Reesors and a Cober from Markham also located in the area in the '30's and '40's.

A few names stand out in the Second. Sherwood Palmer settled first on lot 20 in 1834. David Gilchrist who was active in the Erskine Church came to No. 27 in 1832 from Scotland. George Brown of East Lothian bought the north half of 28 in 1833. George Hollinger got the south half of 32 in 1837 and his family still own it. The Hollingers also owned part of 32 in the First.<sup>4</sup>

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Although Pickering was not fully settled and bustling until after the 1830's, those who had settled before 1837 did feel themselves to be affected by government policies; many of them thought adversely so. Dissatisfaction with the governing of Upper Canada had existed long before William Lyon Mackenzie channeled it into open rebellion. Arbitrary rule by the Establishment, and complaints about the education system, the Clergy Reserves, and lack of adequate concern with the problems of the new settlements, provoked the breach of law and order. Scarborough seems to have remained loyal and the Mennonites in Markham

refused to involve themselves in such violent proceedings, although they may well have sympathized with the aims of the radicals. Pickering, on the other hand produced a fair number of followers for Mackenzie. It is hard to discover exactly who were rebels but following is a list of men from the site area whom we know or think were involved. From Pickering: Silas Bardwell, John Gibson, Russell Baker, Charles Crocker and possibly his brother Wickham, Reuban Parker and maybe John G. Parker, merchant, Henry Weaver, blacksmith, G.G. Parker, Louis Terry, Landon Wurtz, Alem Marr 32, IV and his father-in-law Joseph Clarkson, Aaron Baller and son, possibly John Clarke, William Marr, Nelson and Thomas Matthews, Townsend, Randal, Asa, Joel and Joshua Wixson, William O'Brien Jr. and Sr., and maybe Hugh John O'Brien and Albert Smith. There was a heavy concentration in the Brougham area. Four of Thomas Matthews' sons--Peter, Hiran, Joseph and David, William Bentley who kept the store, George Yeomans, brother-in-law of the Matthews brothers, Samuel Brillingers, tanner in Brougham, Andrew Hubbard, 19, V, John Pride Phillips, 22, V, Patrick Simpson, George Spencer, John and Jonathan Stephens, Simpson Bentley, and Samuel Bentley both father and son, William Barclay, son of George, and Thomas Sharrard and Asher Wilson, both members of the Christian Church of Brougham. There were two men who might have come from the site area of Markham: Thomas Wilson and Peter Shell. Most of the men were yeoman farmers but the government tried to make out that they were labourers in order to make the rebellion seem more plebeian and less significant.<sup>5</sup> The events of December 5-7 had serious repercussions in several ways. The lives of many were adversely effected immediately; the Family Compact found itself investigated and severely criticized and in the following decade the political and administrative system was radically altered and responsible government finally emerged.

At the time of Mackenzie's stand north of the city, Peter Matthews led sixty men in a flanking movement to the east.

They stopped the westbound mail and set fire to the Don River bridge on the Kingston Road. However, the bridge remained intact, loyal militia converged on Toronto, and the rebels, outnumbered and out-gunned, dispersed into hiding. Matthews and some of his men went north to the James Duncan place south of Steeles Avenue for refuge. A loyalist saw their tracks in the snow; so he sent his daughter to borrow a sewing needle from the Duncans. She reported strange men in the house, her father informed the authorities and Matthews and men were surprised in their sleep and marched off to Toronto.<sup>6</sup> This was all part of mass arrests of guilty and suspected people which followed the insurrection. Some were exiled to Van Diemens land, others sent to London where they waited in Newgate for a trial which never took place (it couldn't constitutionally). Randal Wixson from the Ninth Concession and John G. Parker were among the latter. In 1839 they were released upon their oath that they wouldn't return to Canada, a place with which most of them were thoroughly disillusioned. They went to the United States instead.<sup>7</sup>

Peter Matthews was hanged. He and Samuel Lount paid the penalty for treason on April 12, 1838. The government also confiscated Matthews' land, leaving his widow Hannah with no income and fifteen children to support. With all but a couple of the eldest she moved to Michigan, and when the land was returned to the family in 1849 none of the children returned to Canada; rather they rented it out to their uncle David (who had escaped capture by hiding in a strawstack) and other relations.<sup>8</sup>

Mackenzie said of their father:

Capt. Peter Matthews was a jolly, hale, cheerful, cherry-cheeked farmer of Pickering, who lived on his own land, cultivated his own estate, and was the father of fifteen children, who beseeched the Sullivans, the Drapers, and the Robinsons in vain for that mercy to their father which they themselves must yet implore from a



just God. Capt. Matthews had fought bravely for the King of England in the war of 1813, was a man of unstrained reputation, well beloved by his neighbours, unassuming, modest in his deportment, a baptist, unfriendly to high church ascendancy, a true patriot, and indignant at the treacherous, fraudulent conduct of the detestable junto who, in 1837, governed Canada. I often got his vote for a seat in the legislature and always his approbation.<sup>9</sup>

Not all Pickering sided with the rebels. The Baptist church on the Eighth Concession (sometimes known as Gostick's) entered this paragraph in its records on December 8, 1837:

A Dark Cloud has for some Days Been  
suspended over the City of Toronto,  
Devoted to Destruction by a mis-  
guided faction Led on by the unprinci-  
pled McKenzie, the tool of a few influential  
Democrats. To-day the Cloud had Burst and  
overwhelmed the Assailants with Confusion  
and Dismay. Prayer has been heard; the City  
is spared and we are call'd upon to Bless  
God that tho surrounded by the Disaffected  
not one individual connected with this Place  
of worship Has taken any Part in their Rebellious  
proceedings and to Record our Humble Hope  
that Peace and tranquillity may be speedily  
Restored.<sup>10</sup>

Bitter feelings survived the rebellion for several decades. Some years later a gang of men were putting in their allotted time on road work by Thompson's Corner (Brock Road and the Fifth, named after Thompsons Inn on the northeast corner - See Map IV). They went into the inn for a drink, the conversation turned to the rebellion and an ex-Mackenzie supporter found himself hotly put down by the rest. He went outside and waited until the worst of his "tormentors" came out, he swung at the loyalist with a shovel and killed the man. The body had to be guarded for three days until an enquiry could be held, because if the murderer had stolen the corpse he couldn't have been accused of slaying anyone. The enquiry was held, but the Mackenzite had fled and was never tried.<sup>11</sup>

PLATE 4. The Blacksmith Shop in Cherrywood.



PLATE 5. The mystery stone structure on lot 26, Concession II. Could it have been a blacksmith shop, too?

### Cherrywood

The name was suggested by James McCreight, who took it from the old country--Ireland.<sup>12</sup> The village grew up in the 1860's around the school (started before 1850) the church, the blacksmith shop-wagon factory (on the southwest corner by 1865), a brickyard, and a store. (See Maps III and IV). The Pettys came from England and started the brickyard on the north side of the road (behind the store and old cement block garage). It was a family concern which provided employment for three to six men and produced yellow coloured bricks from 1865 to 1915 and tiles to 1918. The Wesleyan Methodist Church was built of Petty brick in 1874. The old hall across the street was the original church c. 1850. The store, run by the Morrishes for over 50 years, was originally built and owned by the Pettys. A barber who came out from Toronto on Saturdays, a couple of dressmakers and a photographer looked after the aesthetic side of life.<sup>13</sup>

After Campbellford, Lake Ontario and Western Railway was built south of Cherrywood in 1911-12, a small station was put up on the east side of Altona Road and south of the tracks. John Petty built the blacksmith shop there about 1912 to serve the horses which brought the milk to the trains.<sup>14</sup> R.C. Davidson supplied coal--stove and nut--at the station on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the brickyard and later the small railroad station, Cherrywood never grew much beyond its farm community. That is not to denigrate it, because such hamlets as Cherrywood, Atha, Brock Road and Mongolia had a definite role in the society. Besides their obvious economic function they gave the surrounding residents someplace, other than a farm, with which to identify. Social life, revolving as it did around church and school, was thus also centred on the village since the schoolhouse and church were located in or near the hamlets.

To the east of Cherrywood on lot 26, Concession II an intriguing barn-like stone structure stands in the northwest corner of the lot. William Wilkie, from Fife, rented the sixty acres in the corner from William Holmes in 1832, bought it in 1844 and didn't sell until 1880, so it may very well have been he who built it.<sup>16</sup> But what it was used for is another question. Tremaine's map has a store near that corner which was remembered by old time residents of Cherrywood,<sup>17</sup> but hardly seems likely to have been this stone building.

### Brock Road

A saw mill and school and blacksmith shop formed the original nucleus of this hamlet in the early 1850's. (See Maps III and IV) James Jackson came to Canada in 1846 and he probably opened his blacksmith shop by the crossroads of the Brock Road and the Fourth Line soon after. He and his son William expanded into a carriage factory, turning out the patented Jackson's cart.<sup>18</sup> William Jackson then opened a store - dry goods, groceries, hardware and carriage maker's supplies - in early 1891. He was already supplying paint via the carriage factory.<sup>19</sup> Two years later a new store building was erected which included a large hall for religious meetings and Sunday school.<sup>20</sup> Needless to say, the crossroads had taken on the name of Jackson's Corners until 1891, when a post office was established there and designated Brock Road,<sup>21</sup> thereby the hamlet became official. It expanded for several decades in a small way. Jackson moved with the times and sold gasoline engines and John Deer machinery. A skating rink had been built and a butcher shop opened. When the CN line went through Brock Road the residents got the company to have two trains stop, one in each direction, for passengers and milk. It seemed as if the village was about to boom when a stand and shelter for horses followed; but although people agitated for a station one was never built,<sup>22</sup> and the community remained small and quiet.



### Whitevale

This village was an excellent example of nineteenth century industry concentrating by a power source and then expanding of its own accord; but fires and modern competition from Toronto have left Whitevale a shadow of it's former self. It all began in the 1820's when John Major built a saw mill. The hamlet was known as Majorville--because of the mill and the number of Majors who lived close by on the Fifth Concession line. In approximately 1855 Truman P. White whose father Ira, son-in-law of Peter Reesor, had bought the saw mill, built a grist mill, a cooperage and in 1866 a planing factory.<sup>23</sup> Obviously a name change was in order to Whitevale. T.P. opened a woolen mill in 1867 (it cost \$30,000), the four storey brick pride of the village. Whitevale thrived, with ups and downs, for the rest of the century. In 1890, the Whitevale correspondent to the Pickering News gloried in "three general stores, two blacksmiths, two wagon shops, undertakers [Samuel Pennock sold furniture as well as undertaking services], harness shop, grist mill, brush factory, grindstone factory, barber shop, three dressmakers, three gardeners, money order and post offices, hotel, [part of which is still standing] brass band [Whitevale Cornet Band], two churches and four lodges."<sup>24</sup> The cheese factory seems to have folded.<sup>25</sup> But this was a tenuous prosperity. Firstly, fires continually changed the face of Whitevale. A carriage factory and the cooperage went in 1874, the woolen mill was gutted several years later, and then the planing mill and grist mill. The planing mill was rebuilt on the site of the grist mill (and subsequently burned in 1899) which in turn was rebuilt inside the shell of the old woolen mill,<sup>26</sup> and it burned down five or six years ago. (The current Whitevale mill which replaced the brick building still uses water power.)

The economic consequences of these fires were severe, because they meant lost jobs, and the men out of work had no option but to move to another place. Even T.P. White went



PLATE 6. The current mill in Whitevale is the lone survivor of past industry. It is still run by water power.



PLATE 7. T.P. White built this charming Classic Revival house.



PLATE 8. The old inn of Whitevale. There was a wing on the west (right) side.

to Pilot Mound, Manitoba in 1882 in order to recoup his heavy losses from the mill fires in Whitevale.

These factories were not large concerns. They never employed more than seven to twelve people each, depending on the season; those powered by water made use of the spring run-off to do extra work. The safety record of these works was not exceptionally good. Of course, there was no compensation for mishaps such as losing a finger in the machinery, which was one of the most frequent occurrences; only occasionally did more serious accidents happen.<sup>27</sup>

Whitevale thus was a village of small entities; a farming community (by definition a mixture of services on a small scale) with small scale industry. The latter was precariously balanced--fire and technological change took their toll so that the industrial base altered and then dried up, leaving just the farmers. But even in its heyday as one of the industrial villages of Pickering the relationships between the residents and the "industries" were on the level of one to one. Although the factories were involved in mass production, the size and scope were not large and the concerns were not yet very far removed from the artisan tradition of pre-Industrial Revolution Europe. Certainly some of the shops were on the same scale as those of the older period. In other words, "industrial" did not denote the large, impersonal style of modern concerns; everything was more intimate.

With the exception of the current Whitevale Mill and street names (Mills Street and Factory Street) the industrial village of the last century has vanished; even the village as a farming community has declined in the last few decades as more and more commuters moved in; only the houses built in Whitevale's heyday remain.





FIGURE 7. Whitevale in 1877. Notice the dearth of trees. From the Illustrated Historical Atlas of Ontario County.



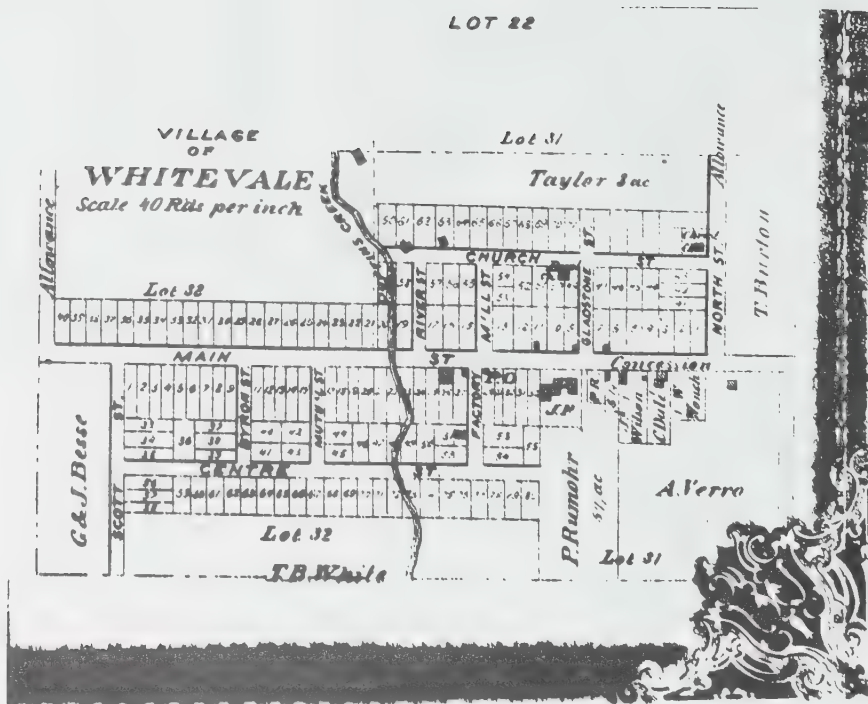


FIGURE 6. From the Illustrated Historical Atlas of 1877.



PLATE 9. Andrew Glen's farmhouse was built by Thomas Hubbard at Thompson's Corners in the 1840's.

### Thompson's Corners

Although this crossroads never grew, it is important in the history of Pickering. C. 1831 Andrew Thompson built a three-storey inn on the northeast corner of Brock Road and the Fifth. (See Map IV) From 1835-1849 the township meetings were held there until the new hall was built in Brougham.<sup>28</sup> There was also a store next to the tavern in the 1850's.<sup>29</sup> Diagonally across the road on lot 19, IV an early cemetery is hidden among the trees on the hill west of the mushroom factory. Across the street on the fifth concession is an early Hastings family burial plot and next to it is the Glen farm. The Glen house was built c.1840 by Thomas Hubbard, who bought the land in 1821. He was township clerk in 1811 so it is assumed he had settled there shortly after 1800. But the age of the house and barn is not as important as what happened on that farm in 1932. Andrew Glen, who had bought the south 50 acres in 1923, hosted a conference of socialists from Ontario which passed a resolution on June 26, 1932 asking J.S. Woodsworth to form a national socialist conference. Woodsworth replied that he would do so in the West and the CCF was founded.<sup>30</sup> (See Plate 9)

### Brougham

Brougham's importance came from its location. Firstly, its position on the Brock Road made it a logical stopping place for travellers--hence the three inns. (See Map IV) Since the village is in the centre of the township the municipal offices were located there; and a favourable offer of land gave the village the Agricultural Society's fair grounds in 1866.

Thomas Hubbard, Thomas Matthews, David Crawford, James Sharrard and John Major had settled land in the area within the first two decades of the Nineteenth Century and

John Staats was renting the Crown Reserve No. 21, V in 1817, indicating an early nucleus of settlement at the crossroads. However, the commercial centre was originally to the east at Howell's Hollow, 15, V (See Map IV) where Henry Howell had bought a saw and grist mill (constructed by a Mr. Sicely) and built a distillery c. 1833. The post office was located there in 1836 and called Brougham after Lord Brougham.<sup>31</sup> In 1829, William Bentley from Syracuse, New York bought part of 19, VI at the crossroads and six years later he opened up a store and the intersection became Bentley's Corners. When the post office was moved to his store the name moved too, and the hollow declined into oblivion.<sup>32</sup> William Bentley and his brother James opened up a patent medicine factory in the 1840's which produced Egyptian salve, National Pills and Pain Remover among other sovereign remedies for about twenty years, first as Bentley and Co., then as Woodruff, Bentley and Co. (Nelson Woodruff, a brother-in-law, was taken into the firm.) The factory was on the southeast corner where the United Church was built in 1890 (See Maps III and IV) and the lovely house across the road was built by William Bentley in 1853-55. They sold their products from Toronto east into Quebec but apparently they couldn't compete with larger Toronto firms and were amalgamated into one such concern.<sup>33</sup> This was Brougham's most intriguing industry. A steam saw mill operated from c. 1858 to a fire in 1867, after which it was rebuilt to include wooden-ware production and was moved to Green River several years later.<sup>34</sup> Besides these two factories, there were two carriage shops and the usual tailor, butcher, harness maker, carpenter, tanner, shoemaker, and after 1875, James Howitt, weaver.<sup>35</sup>

But it was the hotels which really made Brougham hum. Freight and stages coming up the Brock Road and going over to Markham via the Sixth and Ninth Concession Lines<sup>36</sup> provided enough customers for three inns. The Central Hotel



PLATE 10. The old Brougham Hotel without its fancy veranda.



BROUGHAM HOTEL, J.M. GEROW Proprietor. Having bought of Mr. Thos. Poucher, the above hotel, and refitted the same throughout, I intend to keep a strictly temperence house, in conformity with the law of the land. A call respectfully solicited. An attentive hostler always in attendance.

FIGURE 9. Mr. Gerow announces his policy.

From Pickering News, Dec. 17, 1886, p. 1.

PLATE 11. The former Commercial Hotel.





was built by Powell Woodruff and has vanished. The Brougham built by C. Matthews c. 1858, became a temperance establishment in 1886, and was bought by the township in 1940 for use as offices until the new building was built on Kingston Road. The Commerical was built as an addition to Sampson Webb's residence, and has reverted to a house. (See Map IV and Plates 10 & 11) It is hard to envisage all the bustle--the arrivals and departures and the locals coming in for a drink (alcoholic or otherwise) and a chat--while looking at the two remaining structures as they stand today, but how full they must have been after township meetings or during the agricultural fairs!

In 1866, the Pickering Agricultural Society which had been founded sixteen years earlier bought four acres near the steam mill from James Hubbard to provide facilities for its annual fair and stock shows.<sup>37</sup> The fall fair with its

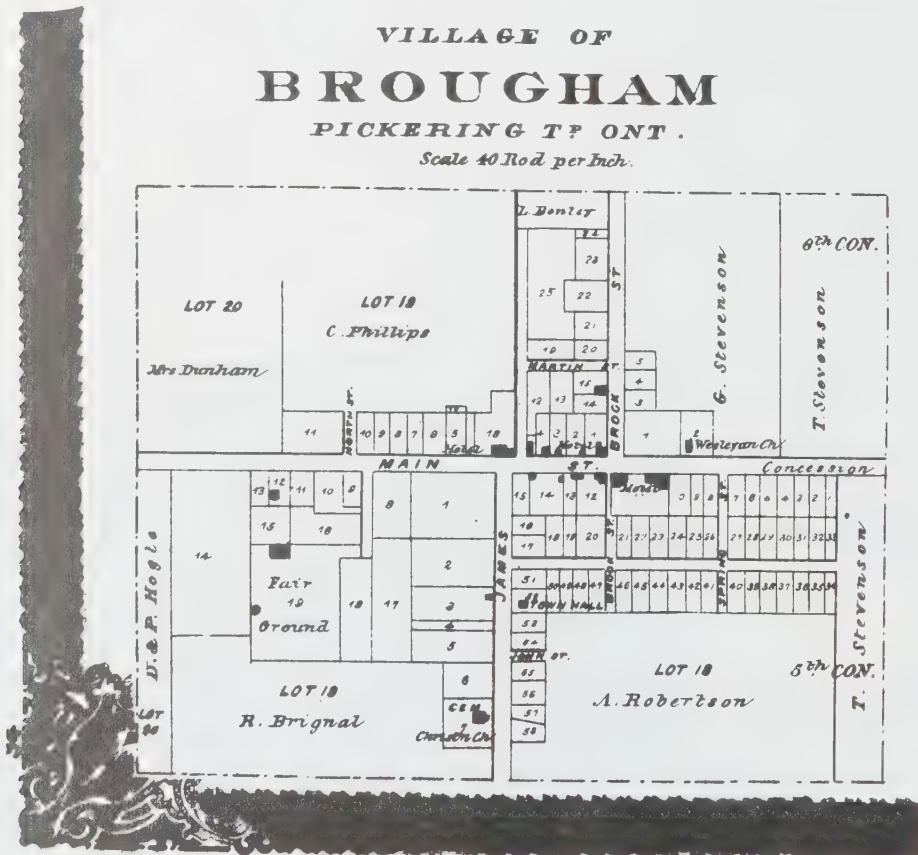


Plate 8. The Brock Road has been altered since this 1877 map was drawn.

exhibits and prizes for various stock, roots and vegetables, fruits, dairy produce, machines, farm implements, etc., "domestic manufacture", fine arts, "Ladies Department", and Grain Seeds and Flour, flourished on that site (see map of Brougham, p. 74), until 1889, after which time two more spring stock shows were held and the fair grounds sold.<sup>38</sup>

There were no clear cut reasons for the demise of such township fairs. Too many, in close geographical proximity probably reduced attendance. Certainly, as the Entry Book attested, there was no lessening of enthusiasm on the part of exhibitors.

One of the oldest institutions in Pickering township was the Christian Church of Brougham. A group of seven met in 1824 in response to a visit by Elder Marison from the States and formed a congregation. James Wright Sharrard was one of the more active members, even to the point of allowing other brethren to make use of the plot of land on his farm, lot 21, Concession VI in which he had buried members of his family from 1811. The cemetery is currently owned by the Christian Church and some of the gravestones have twentieth century dates on them. The church in Pickering suffered from the anti-republican, anti-American backlash after 1837 and seems to have dispersed until 1859 when Elder Tatton reformed the congregation. They built a brick chapel with a domed belfry just south of Brougham, where the union cemetery is now, (See Map IV) which was unfortunately torn down some years ago.<sup>39</sup>

A concession north of Brougham John Miller from Scotland began to farm in 1839 on land partly cleared by the Barclays. He had four sheep and two cows, taken as wages from his uncle George in Markham after working there four years. (See Map III) That year his father William came over with the rest of the family and brought over ten Leicester sheep, four

white swine and two dogs. Within a decade, the family had begun importing animals: Shorthorn cattle, Leicester and Shropshire sheep, Clydesdales and swine; they specialized in seed stock, and were often the first to import a breed into North America. John Miller from Brougham, Robert Miller north of Stouffville and George Miller in Markham made the Miller name well known in at least three continents. Thistle Ha' on parts of lots 16-18, VII is John Miller's original farm. The house was built in 1855 and added on to in 1866, and Hugh Miller is still farming in the tradition his grandfather started, raising Shorthorns and Shropshires.<sup>40</sup>

### Green River

Green River rivaled and then replaced Brunswick Hill to the east as a commerical centre. (See Map IV) Until the 1860's lots 28-29 on the Sixth Concession Line contained the school, church and a blacksmith shop. A Baptist chapel was built in 1847 by the cemetery on the north side of Highway 7 and moved to the current edifice in Green River in 1888. The school was on lot 30, V (1842) and was removed to 32, VI in 1864. (See Map IV) The Visitors Book for that year has the entry "William Johnson, Aurora, Visited the Skool and to their dissgrase found the teacher and skollars fast asleep". One wonders why?<sup>41</sup>

Green River became a busy village with several mills and factories and the home of one of Pickering's better known entrepreneurial families. Benjamin Doten had a blacksmith and carriage shop as early as 1849. William Barnes built the saw mill in 1857 and in 1870 he added a factory (the one moved from Brougham) for tubs, pails, handles. Edward and John Smith built the grist mill in the '70's and the store and public hall.<sup>42</sup> (See Maps III and IV) Apparently, there was a hotel too.<sup>43</sup>



PLATE 12. Alpheus Hoover erected this staid residence.

## PROFESSIONAL CARDS

### VETERINARY

H. Hopkins, Veterinary Surgeon, Graduate of the Ontario Veterinary College, Toronto, and practical horseshoer, etc. On account of increase of practice and my accustomed visits every Saturday to Whitevale, Cherrywood and Dunbarton will attend the diseases of the horse foot at my own forge Green River, in the forenoons of Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of each week. A first class assistant horseshoer always on hand. Veterinary instruments made to order. Medicine for horses and cattle always on hand. Calls by night or by day promptly attended to. Address, Green River, Ontario.

From Pickering News, Nov. 19, 1886, p.1.

FIGURE 10. Mr. Hopkins must have had a flourishing practice.



Peter Reesor Hoover, grandnephew of the Peter Reesor, bought the grist mill in 1877 (adding it to the cheese factory in Whitevale and his other milling operations).<sup>44</sup> As already related P.R. was very active in commercial enterprises in Locust Hill. His eldest son Alpheus inherited his commercial interests on P.R.'s death in 1901 and became well known outside the district for his championing of independent telephone companies. In 1902 Alph Hoover took the lead in organizing a telephone group for Brougham, Locust Hill, Green River and Whitevale area known as the Markham and Pickering Telephone Company. Hoover asked Canadian Pacific for permission to install a phone in the Locust Hill station but the Bell Company had the monopoly with CP so permission was refused. The enterprising Mr. Hoover put an instrument into a nearby house in order to furnish subscribers with information on trains. However, W.F. McLean, MP for East York, who advocated public ownership of utilities became interested in the problem with which Hoover was faced. McLean and Sir William Mulock, Postmaster General, had a special committee on telephone systems created and a good deal of information on telephones was publicized which helped popularize the instrument and independent companies. Otherwise the committee never did anything substantial.<sup>45</sup> By 1905 there were enough companies in the area east of Toronto to justify the formation of the York and Ontario Independent Telephone Union which saw itself as the bulwark of the defence against the encroaching Bell system. There were ten member companies. A.F. Wilson of the Markham and Pickering Company suggested, and the union accepted and helped organize, the Canadian Independent Telephone Association in Toronto in 1905 with Alpheus Hoover as president. Markham and Pickering reorganized as the Home Telephone Company c. 1920, but it overextended itself and had to sell to a Bell subsidiary in 1940. By buying up one company at a time, Bell managed to circumvent the Independent Union and take over all the companies by 1960.<sup>46</sup>

### Atha

Although this was a very small hamlet with a store, (and Post Office), blacksmith shop, school and several nearby mills, that was enough to engender a certain sense of community. It is an excellent example of a few essential services providing a focal point for the nearby population. Besides whatever social functions the church and school sponsored, such as garden parties or picnics, other local groups, the Young Peoples Literary Society for one, offered local entertainment.<sup>47</sup> The school house shifted as per usual from the frame school on lot 30, VIII, built in 1841, to the present brick community centre built in 1864. (See Map IV) Adam Spears built a saw mill on 29, VII in the 1840's as did David Lehman on lot 35, VIII in the '30's.<sup>48</sup> Although the Ontario and Quebec RR went "through" Atha in 1884 it was not until 1911 that trains stopped there to pick up milk from the farmers.<sup>49</sup> The church nearest the community was the Gostick Baptist congregation on the northwest corner of 24, VII. (See Map IV) Thomas Gostick was the pastor for the English immigrants who had gotten together in the early 1830's, solicited £15 from friends in the old country, which was an unusual expedient, as most congregations started from scratch wholly on their own, and built the church in 1835. It was used until 1870 when they amalgamated with the Baptist church in Claremont.<sup>50</sup> The cemetery is all that remains.

### Aitona

Again we have a small milling centre on a watercourse which has altered radically with the change in technology. The Nighswanders built a woolen mill (lot 31, IX) and grist and cider mill after 1851. Joseph Monkhouse built a saw mill south of his store in the late '50's. The saw mill didn't last long, and the woolen mill was changed to a grist mill before the turn of the century, until destroyed by a fire in the 1940's. Only the cider mill is still functioning. (See Map III) The first



PLATE 13. The 1852 Altona Mennonite Church has not been altered much.



FIGURE 11. Altona and Glasgow in 1860 according to Tremaine.

grist mill is gone, of course, although the two mill ponds still exist.<sup>51</sup>

Besides the mills Altona had the Monkhouse store. (See Map IV) Joseph opened the store in the southeast corner in 1850, a year after he arrived from England, and the family operated it until 1940, when it was sold and later subdivided into apartments. The Monkhouse store was known for miles and miles not just for being a fine general emporium, but also for its second floor completely stocked with china directly from England. People still talk about the china.<sup>52</sup>

At the northeast corner the Altona Inn flourished as the half way point between Stouffville and Claremont where people could fortify themselves for the rest of the journey. (See Map IV) The present brick structure replaced an earlier edifice. After the area went dry under Local Option custom diminished so it became a residence. Then O. Madill turned it into a store which continued to operate until the early 1960's.<sup>53</sup> Other businesses have been the usual blacksmith, carpenter and butcher, and a cobbler. A temperance hall on the northwest corner was heavily used by all sorts of groups, and even as a school for 1911-12, while the present community centre was being built. But the village never grew to the size of Whitevale, probably because Stouffville was so close.

The southeast corner, north of the Monkhouse store holds the old Mennonite church, built 1852, and its cemetery. (See Map IV) This church was part of the 1860 circuit of meetings with Cedar Grove, the Wideman Church and Edgeley, Vaughan. It is still used by the Wisler group (traditionalists) while the modern Mennonites share the facilities of the Christian church (built 1875) with the Christians. The lot had been bought by Abraham Stouffer from Pennsylvania in 1809 and with



the Nighswanders, Hoovers, Lehman and Barkeys to the west and east of the village, the Mennonites have been well represented to the area.<sup>54</sup>

#### UXBRIDGE

The small section of Uxbridge within the airport boundaries centred around the village of Glasgow. Settlers came to the area after 1808. Morden, to 5, I in 1815, and Forsyth to 4, II in 1814, were two of the earliest families. Other names were (are) Kester, Wideman, Stouffer, and Millard.<sup>55</sup> Glasgow became a small milling centre with a saw mill on 4, II and a grist/saw mill north of the sideline of lot 6, II. Both were built before 1860; the saw mill by a Forsyth and the grist mill possibly by a Mr. McNaughton. Of the saw mill there is no trace, the grist mill survived until the 1930's as a chopping and saw operation.<sup>56</sup>

On the northwest corner of the crossroads, Elisha Miller erected a hotel (complete with ballroom) in the 1850's. The building remained an inn until 1907 when the Davises moved in and eventually replaced it with a new house. Diagonally across the road was the school, built in 1860 to replace the 1836 building on the Forsyth property. And across from that on the northeast corner was the store, first erected in 1867 by Benjamin Parker and rebuilt after a fire. Until 1911 the post office was there, but it was not a very big store, just staples, candy, tobacco, etc. The blacksmith was down the side road to the east. The South Glasgow Cemetery was connected with the Methodist Church which put up a frame building in 1858 and tore it down in 1940.<sup>57</sup> (See Map IV)

Glasgow's heyday has obviously passed with the mills. Once the sound of the blacksmith's hammer on the anvil could be heard all day, as in Atha, Altona, Cherrywood, Brock Road

and other villages. The nineteenth century technology is passé, considered only as quaint or artistic, the family farm seems doomed. We appear to have no more than ghost towns with some scattered remains of the industrial past and many memories of what it used to be. Only the farms bear a close resemblance to what they once were in the last century and a half. It is, of course, inevitable, time brings changes; but what is historic is not dead. We have shadows, not ghosts. The challenge is to accept the past and incorporate it in the future thoughtfully.

FOOTNOTES - 4

1. Rouge, Duffin, Highland, Petticoat Valley Conservation Report, 1956, p.9.
2. W.A. McKay, The Pickering Story (Pickering: Township of Pickering Historical Society, 1961), p.23.
3. Ibid., p.33.
4. AO, Abstract Index to Deeds, Pickering North and South Vols. A; Township Papers, Concessions 1-9; W.R. Wood, Past Years in Pickering (Toronto: W. Griggs, 1911), pp.214-316.
5. McKay p.73; Ronald Stagg, research for PhD thesis on the subject of the social background of the Mackenzie Rebellion of 1837 and a reassessment of the events of the rebellion.
6. RDHP Report, p.90; McKay, pp.72-3.
7. McKay, pp. 74-9.
8. Ibid., p.73.
9. E.C. Guillet, The Lives and Times of the Patriots (Toronto: Ontario Publishing, 1963), p.270.
10. Wood, pp. 31-2.
11. AO, Pickering Oral History Tape, Mr. Howard Turner. Mr. Turner's maternal grandfather, James White, helped guard the body.
12. Wood, p. 266.
13. Interview with Mrs. Wes Petty, April 11, 1973; Pickering News, Jan. 3, 1896, p.5.
14. Interview with Mrs. Petty.
15. Pickering News, Feb. 23, 1912, p.4.
16. Wood, p.309.
17. Interview with Mrs. Petty. Her mother-in-law talked of the store.
18. Interview with Robert Miller, March 22, 1973; Wood, p.254.
19. Pickering News, Jan. 23, 1891, p.1.
20. Ibid., August 17, 1893, p.5.
21. Ibid., Jan. 9, 1891, p.8.

22. Ibid., Oct. 30, 1914, p.1.
23. McKay, p.86.
24. Pickering News, May 16, 1890; Beaton Scrapbook, Pickering News, July 11, 1884.
25. McKay, p. 120.
26. AO, Pickering Oral History Tapes, Hugh Pugh.
27. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Howard Turner, Dec. 29, 1972; Pickering News, June 23, 1882, p.2.
28. Wood, p.299.
29. Letter from Frank Stephenson to Andrew Glen, Feb. 10, 1944, in possession of Mr. Glen.
30. AO, Pickering Oral History Tape, Andrew Glen.
31. McKay, p.86.
32. Wood, p.117.
33. Interview with Robert Miller, Dec. 14, 1972; Wood, p. 118; Woodruff, Bentley and Co., Account Book c.1845-55. There are thirty pages listing distributors for one year.
34. Mrs. T.C. Brown, "Early History of Brougham" (n.p.n.d), p.3; Interview with Robert Miller, March 22, 1973; Wood, p. 118.
35. Wood, pp. 119, 252; McKay, p. 120.
36. RDHP Report, p.112.
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38. Township of Pickering Agricultural Society, Entry Book 1885-1891; Pickering News, Feb. 3, 1890, p.1.
39. Wood, pp. 119-20; McKay, pp. 57-9.
40. AO, Pickering Oral History Tape, Hugh Miller.
41. Wood, pp. 96, 173-4.
42. Ibid., pp. 156-7.
43. Pickering News, June 22, 1883.
44. The Reesor Family in Canada, pp.92-3.
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47. Pickering News, May 2, 1890, p.5.
48. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Ernie Carruthers, May 8, 1973.
49. Pickering News, Dec. 15, 1911, p.1.
50. Wood, pp. 96-106.
51. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Carruthers, Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Lewis, May 2, 1973; Wood, p. 272.
52. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Lewis and Mr. and Mrs. Bert Lewis, May 2, 1973.
53. Ibid.
54. L.J. Burkholder, A Brief History of the Mennonites in Ontario (Toronto: Livingstone, 1935), pp. 117-8; Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Bert Lewis; AOQ Abstract Index to Deeds, Pickering North Vol. A.
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56. Interview with Mr. Walt Davis.
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## CHAPTER 5

### THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

The listing of buildings, names and dates is repetitious but it serves the purpose of emphasizing that the site was not a rural slum or in an economic backwater. It was a lively, vibrant area with prosperous times and recessions. There were distinct evolutionary stages in its development. In the pioneering period, life was a struggle to survive and grow, in the attempt to make of the land what the settlers wanted. They lived in log cabins, their land was in all conditions from primeval forest to acres cleared of trees but with stumps still interspersed among whatever crop they were trying to grow, to fields completely cleared and ploughed. Mills were scarce and contacts with other people infrequent. Then the district began to fill up. More people came, the lots settled earliest had become proper farms with only a certain percentage of woodlot still left. Mills and their concurrent population centres had proliferated. Frame, brick and stone houses were the rule, not the exception. By the 1850's and 60's prosperous times for farmers and villagers had arrived. The next two-three decades encompassed an attempt to maintain the situation of the mid-century. But the economic facts of life changed. Technological advances were pushing industry into larger plants and larger communities and the villages began to decline into shadows of their former selves, and some farmland was abandoned as more men moved to the city.

But history is not the examination of any one period as if it was a cross section under a microscope. Every period is "transitional"; there are aspects of the past represented and elements of the future to be seen. It is pointless to think only in terms of each period. Few pioneer families' farms are still intact, even fewer early pioneer families are still in the area, not a great many houses are unaltered, none of the villages are what they were one hundred or even ten years ago. But there is ample evidence, if one looks even super-



ficially, of the changes which have taken place--of the history of the site. These mutations are as important as the limited number of perfect examples remaining.

Awareness of this past will never be adequately transmitted by isolated buildings and historical plaques. Pioneer villages and their like are not the solution, because they are infrequent experiences in the lives of most people. What is needed is a feel for, and a comprehension of, how old houses, kerosene lamps, wooden rockers, surviving mill ponds, and "strange" gadgets such as apple peelers fit together into the way of life that preceded ours. We must realize that we are dealing with a whole which is only the sum of its parts. These are interesting, pleasing to the eye or not, great for skating, uncomfortable or strangely well designed. But they are of limited value unless we put them into their position and view the picture in its entirety. It is the whole we should be after--the ambiance of the past. The milieu can teach us more than the Campbell House, or even for that matter the Royal Ontario Museum. Therefore a prime goal of this project should be to integrate the historical with the futuristic. That does not mean enshrining the status quo. Recognition of historical background does not entail holding time still, much less turning the clock back as one does at Black Creek or St. Marie among the Hurons. The trick is to leave solid traces of the former character of our site--its villages and rural roads--to provide variety and, more important, a sense of continuity between the rural past and the urban future.

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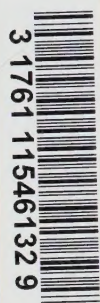


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